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HISTORY

OF THE

REIGNS OF LOUIS XVIII.

AND

CHARLES X.

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BY

EYRE EVANS CROWE,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF FRANCE," "THE GREEK AND THE TURK," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

It would be idle to enumerate the sources of almost contemporary history. The journals of a parliamentary period are ample storehouses of material, of which the use is facilitated by the excellent *Annuaire*, or French Annual Register. The pamphlets, so numerous whenever the daily press was restricted, and the monthly or bi-monthly periodicals, are the records of opinion and argument. The Memoirs of the period, sufficiently numerous with reference to the first years of the Restoration, but much fewer as it advances, have been referred to by name for facts or opinions which at all differ from those generally recounted or received. The French histories of the Restoration must themselves be regarded in the light of original and genuine sources of information; the writers of them having derived much of their knowledge from personal relations and from their connexion with political party.

M. Lubis and M. de Lamartine enjoyed in the early and the latter periods of the Restoration the confidence of

the Royalists, and may be considered as advancing their arguments and stating their views. M. Vaulabelle is the historian of the Liberal side. M. Bignon, as far as he goes, was the exponent of Imperialist claims. M. Capefigue, the intimate of Messieurs Decazes and Pasquier, later the journalist of Martignac, has written his narrative of events and of their causes as these politicians beheld them. These I have of course consulted. M. Guizot's numerous pamphlets throw more light on the epoch than the writings of any other man. In the *Globe* and the *Révue Française* are to be found the opinions of his friends and party. But although much may still be written respecting the epoch of the Restoration, there are few secrets now that remain to be revealed, and no mysteries that require solving. The struggles and events of French politics during that period took place more in the forum than the closet; and there remains little that garrulity has not already revealed, or that the proverbial curiosity of the nation has not penetrated and exposed.

LONDON,
July, 1854.

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THE HISTORY

OF

THE REIGNS OF LOUIS XVIII.

AND

CHARLES X.

FROM 1815 TO 1830.

CHAPTER I.

CAUSES WHICH LED TO MILITARY ASCENDANCY: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF IT.

No more curious or interesting problem has arisen out of the events of modern history, than that suggested by the failure of a nation, so civilized, so spirited, so intellectual, and so fond of freedom, as the French, to establish and to work satisfactorily and permanently a constitutional monarchy. No country had ever more fearful experience of extremes in government. Within the space of little more than a quarter of a century, France offered the spectacle of the absurd pretensions and imbecile attempts to govern of an absolute, hereditary, and civilian monarchy, of the equally hopeless and far more criminal efforts of a people, after deposing their sovereign, to suffice to the task of ruling and organizing themselves. A senatorial government of revolutionary notables, dethroning in turn the sovereign people, proved not more just, more efficient,

or more respectable. Every political institution and every social class having been tried, found unworthy, and swept away (parliaments and representative assemblies not excepted), there remained the army, the sole body which was organized and disciplined, that could obey a superior without that superior decimating it, and fulfil the soldiers' duty of defending the country, without proscribing, sacrificing, and massacring each other. The rise of the army in France, to dominate over all other classes and institutions, cannot be considered as owing so much to the ambition of its chief as to the necessity of things. Similar events will produce similar results. And whenever the people of a great country refuse to obey their old masters, and fail to discover or agree upon any mode of organizing themselves in a political system, power must devolve upon any body or class which possesses association or discipline, an acknowledged authority, or a combined will. In many countries, and at several epochs, the clergy formed the most perfect and formidable association: they dominated in consequence. In the present day, circumstances endow the military with this advantage, which is denied to almost all other classes and professions. The consequence is, that when civilian efforts fail, when the nobles, shorn of what they consider their right, rebel against the rest of society, when the middle and lower classes, the employing and employed, fall into deep and irremediable dissension, the army necessarily steps in, not to conquer or grasp the right of domination, but to assume it as a task that cannot be declined. Military usurpations have ever been due more to the follies and foibles of those who were not soldiers, than to the ambition or audacity of those who were.

Military domination is, however, but a temporary remedy,

for military power can in reality found nothing. If, indeed, the warlike struggle be tedious and severe, if the force or the foes to overcome present obstacles which it requires years to subdue, then the conqueror may, no doubt, form military establishments, and organize the country, as if the whole object of life was soldiering, and the only aim of mankind the science of slaughtering, pillaging, and oppressing each other. But even supposing a kingdom or country engaged in a struggle with the surrounding world, and sacrificing everything to soldierdom, an end must come at last. It will be attained even by victory; for after victory will come the task of administering in peace both the conquering and the conquered. But military institutions no longer suffice for this. The sons even of the soldier who has conquered the world, must seek other means of livelihood and eminence than the sword. Commerce engages the one; intellectual, forensic, political eminence attracts another. The rich seek to enjoy, the less rich to advance. Such a world requires freedom as the sphere of its activity, the necessity of its development; and a prolonged attempt to consider a country as a camp could not but ultimately fail and overwhelm the bold but silly man who persisted in it, even were he a Cæsar or a Napoleon. A military dictatorship, therefore, however it may obviate a temporary difficulty, cannot solve the permanent problem of providing a government for a numerous, civilized, intellectual, and physically developed people.

A military government succeeding to a free one, in which publicity of discussion by mouth and by the press was allowed, has the immense advantage of being fully acquainted with the wants and wishes of all classes, together with the means proposed and discussed for satisfying and accom-

plishing them. Napoleon, in fact, when he assumed power, had simply to put in practice by that power all those plans of amelioration which legislators, publicists, and statesmen had been disclosing and discussing for ten previous years. The mind of the nation had been producing its annual crop, garnered more than used, but winnowed and sifted for use. Napoleon had but to select and appropriate, whilst assuming the glory of an originator. And though suppressing for the actual time of his dominion every expression of the cultivated mind or the popular will, he still had the open and well-filled volume of past publicity to recur to, and to be guided by, in order to his preserving the character of representative of the nation, accomplisher of its will, and satisfier of its wants.

The prince who establishes a free or constitutional on the ruins of a military government has no such advantages as these. The immediately past is to him a tenebrous space, into which no light had broken. What people have thought, have desired, if indeed they had not ceased to think, he has no means of knowing. No intellect was then awake, save that of courtiers. Not only the people, but the professional classes, forbidden to think, speak, or write of public affairs, had become, for all the great and public purposes of freedom, worthless and servile. The nation counted subjects, not citizens. Those with any experience of administration had been educated to look exclusively to persons above them, never to people below. So that a prince, situated like Louis XVIII. undertook a herculean task, when he attempted to govern constitutionally a race, which had neither the principles, the materials, the instruments, the knowledge, or the

pride requisite for their concurrence and co-operation in working the representative system.

It is denied, however, to an age as to a man to have more than one great aim or purpose. The predominant necessity with France at the close of the last century was its defence, and consequently the military defence of its territory, its influence, and its great social changes. To save liberty from licentiousness and faction at home, whilst defending it from enemies abroad, was a double task, of which France was incapable. And if the sacrifice of the one to the other filled the higher intellects and cultivated classes of the nation with shame and with regret, the mass of the people, who had found freedom, as it was called, hideous, extortionate, and incapable, but too naturally gave up the hope of fashioning it to aught that was practicable or noble, and not grudgingly gave it in exchange for glory. In tacitly striking this bargain, the French people, whatever right they resigned, were at least not deceived in the promised return. The power of France was established over Europe, and the dominion thus extended opened to a large proportion of the French a splendid career of advancement, eminence, and wealth.

But the more perfectly France became organized and disciplined for war and domination, the more unfit did it become to establish its influence peaceably and permanently over that Europe which it had conquered. For, thanked be Providence and civilization, there are no rights which have been so modified and curtailed as those of conquest. Of old the victor might make of the vanquished his slave, and partition his territory to new holders. But the days of exterminating a people, of enslaving or dispossessing them, are past. The race and the soil remain,

and the victors must devise some means of satisfying the wants and even the pride of the vanquished, for the rule of brute intimidation is far too ineffectual and costly. Had the French republic achieved wide conquest, however turbulent and irregular its rule in foreign countries, it would at least have found friends amongst the classes it emancipated, and by degrees it would have succeeded in the formation of allied states, republics like itself. But a military chief and an embryo emperor, commanding the French soldiers, and through them master of the state, saw or would see nothing in other nations, but monarchs like himself. With these alone he would negotiate—these alone conciliate or court. Napoleon, from character as well as position, was fitted to enact this part of the mere crowned head. His early experience made him acquainted with all that was abhorrent and impuissant in democracy. He thus learnt to ignore the existence of a people altogether. His political optics were so formed as exclusively to discern princes, and courts, and armies. He neither knew what the word *people* meant, nor the worth, nor the power, which it implied.

Hence it was, that although he made the imperial eagle victorious throughout Europe, he made no real effort to implant either French influence or ideas, at least in that popular soil, wherein they could alone take root. Whilst despising the people and popular modes of influence, Napoleon was by no means either skilled or apt to conciliate princes. Personal affections he had none. He soared far above them. But even of political friendship or sincere alliance he was incapable. His own policy and views were continually changing. They became modified and enlarged, as circumstances extended the

sphere of his power. And in the new contingencies and possibilities, which from year to year arose to attract and dazzle him, the ally of one day became the foe of the next; so trifling seemed the fate of even dynasties and nations, in comparison with what appeared to be the predestined and unlimited grandeur of his own. This utter want of consideration for others, this blindness to the necessity of large conciliations, lost Napoleon the friendship of every sovereign, as it procured him the mistrust of every people. There was in truth not a sovereign in Europe, whom he might not have converted into a firm friend; the King of Prussia at one time, the Emperor of Austria at another, the Czar at last. But he was so avaricious of power and dominion, that, like a stupid miser, he knew not how to part with it even for security and profit. It was impossible for an independent country to have humbled itself more to France than Prussia did, which for a long series of years not only tolerated, but aided in French aggrandizement. Such patience and attachment were of no avail, and counted as nothing with Napoleon, who, when Prussia at the eleventh hour flew to arms, showed himself as merciless to it, as he could have been to a power, which, like England, had shown him unswerving enmity from the first.

Generosity, as well as policy, would have dictated such large concessions to Austria, especially after Napoleon had espoused one of its princesses, as would have soothed the pride, satisfied the interests, and secured the alliance of the Court of Vienna. But no: Napoleon could not be generous; and he left the dominions of that first of European princes, into whose family he had married, just as circumscribed and oppressed, with all the wounds inflicted by the sword of conquest still open and unhealed,

to ponder and to doubt, whether Austria had really gained anything by its gift of an Archduchess to the French Emperor, save an increase of severity, exaction, and contempt. Nothing could be more sensible or more just, than the representations which Metternich frankly and repeatedly made to the French Emperor, that his concessions should be large and his treatment generous, if he would knit a firm friendship and alliance. But with many high qualities Napoleon had all the petty meanness of the dealer, whose first principle is never to be overreached; and thus he lost every chance of a steady and firm ally during his rise by want of generosity, as he threw away every chance of treating during the period of his fall by the same higgling spirit, which could never reconcile itself to a fit and large concession in time.

There is this, however, to be said for Napoleon, that in the entire course of his power, he never enjoyed a moment which he could really call peace, in which he could consider his power fixed and his position determined, and in which he could relax from the duty of grasping all the means of war and of offence within his reach, in order to carry on the struggle with his mortal, irreconcilable, indomitable antagonist. One great fact stood prominent throughout the whole epoch, and threw all others into the distance and the shade. This was the great rivalry of France and England. There was in truth no other effectual antagonism. All the forces which other kings or countries marshalled against Napoleon, he swept with ease from the battle-field, and if they rose again year after year to occupy rather than resist him, it was English inveteracy and English wealth that gave galvanic life to these oft-slain monarchs, and enabled them to bring once

more their armies into the field. To reduce, to humble, to subdue England, became necessarily the one and only thought of the conqueror of the Continent, in his treaties and arrangements with the powers of which, he was compelled to look rather to array them against England, than attach them to France.

In this, fortunately, wisdom did not keep pace with power. And it is curious to observe, upon what foolish reasons and futile hopes the great commanding spirits of the age were wont to rely in conducting the great struggle with each other. Pitt feared not to provoke France and to persist in interminable war with a country, which by its very revolution, by the inveteracy which it caused, was able to convert the entire of its life and produce into the instruments and resources of war. Pitt, whose political vision embraced in its sphere only such objects as a regular budget, an active trade, capitalists feeding industry, and all by contributions and by credit sustaining a certain number of armed men to fight;—Pitt could not comprehend a whole country rising to arms, snatching hastily the food which the land afforded, and then rushing on to procure sustenance, equipments, guns, and military skill at the expense of the foreign foes whom they repelled, and of the foreign soil which they came to occupy. That war could feed itself, Pitt for a long time did not understand.

If such mistakes and miscalculations led Pitt into war with an enemy whom he was unable to strike, still greater mistakes and miscalculations led Napoleon into a world-wide antagonism, in which he contrived to undo by his policy the successive advantages which his arms achieved. Could Napoleon, as he worsted and subdued each European foe, have shut out England from his thoughts, and instead

of mulcting and gensd'arming each European country into an active ally against England, treated it as an equal and independent power, with which he was to live in amity and peace, exercising great ascendancy and undoubted influence, but without wounding the pride or wasting the resources of these nations, then Europe would have been Napoleon's at least for all wise purposes of influence, and England, isolated and powerless, must have ended by accepting a peace, and acknowledging a rival, whom it was hopeless to disturb.

But as Pitt believed that a French army could not continue to exist without a budget, so Napoleon imagined that England must expire of poverty and distress if continental trade was cut off from it. It is marvellous, that Napoleon, who was a man of figures, did not procure some statement of the amount of England's habitual trade with the Continent. He might have seen at a glance the small amount of profit accruing from it contrasted with the great annual production of the country's wealth. A little consideration might have taught him, that South America, opened to English trade, was even of itself sufficient to compensate for Europe being closed, even if it could be entirely closed. But Napoleon clung not the less obstinately astride of his idea, which compelled him to treat the powers of the Baltic, especially, as so many vassals, with their necks bowed down to a policy, as powerless to accomplish the aim of him who dictated, as irreconcilable with the interests of those subjected to it. One of the states, which the monomania of Napoleon led him to treat as secondary, and as necessarily amenable to him, was Russia, in which the proprietors of the soil, comprising the whole influence and wealth of the country,

were most injured by the suspension of trade. Russia could not bear so unnatural a pressure. Yet its rebellion against the continental system obliged Napoleon in consistency to march to Moscow—a straining of the sinews of his empire, which not even success would have warranted, or could have repaired.

It was the necessities imposed upon Napoleon by his antagonism with England, and by the mistaken principles upon which he thought it best to carry out that antagonism, —it was this, more than actual greed of territory, which led Napoleon so deeply and irrevocably to offend each of the great powers of Europe. If he swallowed up Holland in his empire, as well as Genoa and Venice, it was that he felt it necessary to close every seaport. If he annexed Hamburg, and deprived Prussia of the course of the Elbe, taking from it Magdeburg, the bulwark of the kingdom, it was with the vain wish to exclude British trade from the great rivers of North Germany. If Austria was deprived of Illyria, and condemned to be an inland power, it was because Napoleon was determined to be master of every coast, from which he might defy his naval enemy, and that, possessed of Dalmatia, he might in time have the means of coercing Turkey, or conquering it, if it proved refractory to his will. It was this same necessity which drove Napoleon into the blunder of invading Spain. His first aim in the peninsula was to strike a blow at Portugal, because it was English. This could not be done without dominating Spain. But how depend upon such creatures as either the reigning monarch of that country, or his son, to conduct or persevére in any policy whatsoever? Their dethronement became necessary, and the task of governing and conquering the whole peninsula became attached, like a

millstone, around the neck of the Emperor Napoleon, and weighed him to the ground.

The discomfiture and fall of the empire and influence of Napoleon were in truth but a question of time. A greater degree of military and political prudence might no doubt have prolonged it, and the glory of his name might have enabled it to endure as long as his life; but the true elements of stability were wanting. The predominant war-spirit, beneath which all Europe was compelled to bow, founded nothing. Whatever good had been indirectly accomplished by the destruction of feudal and other antiquated privileges was shut out and obscured by greater wrongs. The pride and spirit of three great races, the English, the German, and the Spanish, were excited to the intensity of antagonism to France. The pride and spirit of their rulers and aristocracy were, if possible, still more provoked to stand up in the same quarrel. Napoleon opposed nothing to this circle of enmity, save military skill and force; but these were qualities which his enemies were acquiring every day, and by no means imperceptibly. The Austrians at Aspern and at Wagram were as good soldiers as the French, after having been so lately inferior at Austerlitz and at Ulm. The Russians, who had proved equally inferior in Moravia, learned at Eylau that their foe was not indomitable. Military advantages and prowess between nations soon become equalized, since enslavement or extermination is no longer possible.

The only real and personal danger to Europe would have consisted in Napoleon's having followed up his military conquests by civil institutions. It would not have been difficult for him to have invented governments superior to the miserable and stupid despotisms which he

vanquished. There was not a class that he might not have bettered and contented with a share of power and an increase of influence. Aristocracy, people, priesthood, trade, professions, were and are still, so vilely, so unfairly, and so absurdly treated eastward of the Rhine, that a modern Charlemagne had *carte blanche* for the establishment of an European Empire, could he have even seen the materials under his hand. But the smoke of battle offuscated him. How, indeed, could he, who was unable to propose a rational or tolerable system of government for France, nothing in fact beyond treating that great country as a mere *corps de garde*—how could he elevate his mind to the task of legislating for Europe, or reorganizing it, so as that it should be grateful to him for freedom, development, or amelioration? We often hear Napoleon extolled as a great civilian and legislative genius. The want in him of those qualities and of that intelligence, which constitute such a genius, is far more striking.

The reaction of Europe, therefore, and its recovery from a merely military yoke was inevitable, sooner or later. It ran, however, several serious risks of seeing that wished-for moment indefinitely postponed. Tilsit produced one of those great risks;—Tilsit, where after having measured their forces in war, with results sufficiently glorious to one, without being discreditable to the other, the two great autocrats of the East and West, met in amity and understanding for the purpose of dividing the world's power and influence between them. That division seemed so natural, so obvious, so easy, that it is marvellous and providential that they did not succeed in attaining the end to their mutual satisfaction. But if the want of wisdom and policy in the motives and the means of the struggle between

them is remarkable in the case of Pitt and Bonaparte, it is still more remarkable in the celebrated interview between Napoleon and Alexander. Napoleon obtained nothing but the closing of the Russian ports against England: Russia nothing save the contingent possession of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Finland. The two monarchs indulged in dreams and in deceptions, conversed about future projects in the East, whilst they left unsettled and undefined the limits of their respective influence in central Europe, by leaving out of sight and making no account of which the French Emperor was so soon to inflict an indelible affront upon his Russian brother. To any intelligent observer or witness of the conference of Tilsit, it would have been evident, that the two sovereigns were merely patching up a momentary truce, instead of laying the foundation of a lasting peace, or a firmer accord between them. But there was no such witness. Talleyrand, who inclined always to the policy of France securing Austria as an ally, and making to it the largest concessions for that purpose, was not trusted by Napoleon in his negotiations with Alexander. Caulaincourt was preferred to him as a secretary, and as a soldier, who would be an obedient instrument in drawing up the terms of the alliance, and not an unseasonable dealer in remonstrance and advice.

It did not require to be a profound politician in order to see that Napoleon in his position had but two alternatives, either to make a firm friend and thorough ally of the Russian Emperor, or to crush him and put it out of his power to weigh in any proportion with France upon the affairs of Europe. Had Napoleon a council or a cabinet, had he even two or three independent statesmen, whose voice he could have listened to in such matters, they could

not have failed to impress upon him so great a truth. And yet he was blind to it. He had learned at Eylau and at Friedland what he never fully recognised before, that Russia was a first-rate military power, not to be broken in one campaign, or one war, and requiring a very considerable display of force to crush it. This he had not with him in the campaign of Friedland. He wanted peace and breathing-time to muster such armies. This alone was his secret thought at Tilsit. But the affectionate and enthusiastic friendship which Alexander evinced, overcame Napoleon's purely political intentions, and led him to hope that he might long maintain his personal ascendancy over the Czar, and complete his subjugation of England and Spain, that is, become completely master of the West of Europe, with Alexander's tolerance or aid, deferring till after that consummation the regulation or division of Asia and the East of Europe with Russia.

The sudden affection and admiration of Alexander for the French and for their Emperor were more sincere than this, but were not even so durable. All autocrat as he was, the Czar was surrounded by nobles, by courtiers, by friends as well as by the members of his own family, who not only looked with disapprobation upon his alliance with France, but who esteemed it a dereliction of duty and of pride. The Russian aristocracy could not take to their bosom the revolutionary chief, whose arm had completed the destruction of all that was antiquated in Europe, and who had advanced from the Seine to the Niemen to dictate to Russia a breaking off of old alliance, and an acquiescence in new. The noble, the consistent, the unswerving stand that England was making against this terrible power, piqued the emulation of the Russians.

Alexander, setting at nought all these sentiments, stood alone in his own Court. Even the spirit of adulation could induce no voice to echo him; and he well knew, that this disapprobation, however tacit, would extend from the Court, and from the class informed in politics, to the people and the country at large, amongst whom he might become dangerously unpopular. He could face and despise all this, however, if as the fruit of the French alliance he could show some great acquisition, on the side of Turkey: the empire pushed to the Danube, or perhaps to the Ægean, would more than silence every critic. He accordingly pressed Napoleon in this sense, but Napoleon was deaf. A strange numbness at the time pervaded both the policy and the armies of both potentates. Napoleon, instead of pouring his whole force into the peninsula, crushing the Spaniards, and sweeping the English from it, led back his army from the Russian frontier slowly, allowing them to press upon Germany, and indulging them with fêtes and triumphs. Alexander could not even drive the Turks from the principalities, at a time when he was raving and clamouring for the empire of the East. At last Napoleon met the fatal rebuff, not indeed from Alexander, but from the Empress-mother, who refused to give him a Russian princess for a wife. Pique drove Napoleon to make the same demand, or accept the same honour from Austria, and by that one act of marriage the alliance between the Emperor of France and Russia was definitively dissolved.*

After such an intimate bond of connexion, it was impossible not to believe that Napoleon would take mea-

* For the origin of the Russian match, see Villemain's Count De Narbonne.

sures for indemnifying his Imperial father-in-law for his losses, and for resuscitating his empire. This was incompatible with the abandonment of Turkey to Russia. Prince Metternich knew well how to circulate and suffer to escape such little secrets and rumours as aggravated the suspicions of the Court of St. Petersburg. Some proposals that the French Emperor made in certain contingencies to Austria were allowed to transpire, and Alexander had reason to believe, that, far from opening to him the conquest of Turkey or of the East, Napoleon was meditating some new distribution of Poland.

Poland is a name that no Russian potentate can abide. One would say that in political, as in a private murder, the ghost of the victim haunted the assassin. Certain it is, that at the first rumours of the French emperor meditating the resuscitation of Poland, the Russian demanded a categorical declaration, conveyed in a solemn treaty, that France would never lend itself to the resuscitation of Poland. If such a stipulation were a disgrace to France, the demand was an outrage on the part of Russia. It could not but be refused, and the refusal act as a corroboration of the suspicions which the Czar had been led to entertain. It was no wonder that the Czar entertained such a suspicion; for, from the moment that France was not certain of the cordiality and close alliance of Russia, it became important to guard against her as a foe. The single, the obvious, the almost unavoidable mode of doing this was to resuscitate Poland. The monarch who would confer on the Poles that boon, might count on the eternal and strenuous gratitude of every class of them, and, indeed, the respect and favour of the whole Sclavonic race. Providence, one might also say, had provided that race as the

true and natural bulwark against the barbarism of the North. It had saved Germany from the Turks; and its mission was to defend Germany and Europe from the great nomad and military power of the united north of Europe and Asia.

That it was Napoleon's intention finally to restore Poland it is difficult to doubt. To establish French influence solidly in the east of Europe was impossible without it, and the act seemed so natural, and so just, and so fully due from him to those legions of gallant Poles who fought and bled for him, that the project could have been but adjourned in the mind of Napoleon. To re-establish Poland, however, was to have at once Russia, Prussia, and Austria for enemies; and his object at the time was not so much to crush them and eject their dynasties, as to make use of these powers and their resources to drive the English from the Continent. The restoration of Poland was therefore adjourned, and Prussia, as well as Austria, allowed to keep up those skeletons of armies which it was easy to complete into national and gigantic ones, when opportunity should serve or incite. Napoleon had, in fact, but the same hold over Europe, that he had over France—his legions, and his name. The first blow given to his military power shook all the rest of his political edifice, at home and abroad, as if it had been built of card.

Such is a brief sketch of the policy observed by Napoleon to Europe up to the remarkable year of 1812, when the elements, with unwonted severity, came down upon the entire military resources of his empire, amassed and concentrated by him around Moscow, and irreparably swept away the greater and more valuable portion of them from

existence. He had then only France to fall back upon; and it is now time to consider what he had made it.

In the narrative and historic accounts which have appeared of these events and this struggle, it has been invariably the habit of every writer to consider Napoleon as all in all it: is his ascendancy that is admired—his fall that is lamented; whilst the whole current of human events—of the French first struggling to emancipate themselves from inglorious and political despotism at home—of Europe's leaguing to menace and coerce them in matters of which other nations were as ignorant and incapable as France—of the French, rallying to defend themselves, and, in that glorious defence, putting forth an amount of national energy and military genius such as no country ever did before,—all these, the acts and products of a great country, whose spirit evoked, and from whose will sprang, those great armies and great men, are passed by as almost unworthy of notice. The prominent fact of the first years of the century does not so much consist in the personal ascendancy of Napoleon, who was in truth only an instrument or a weapon, as in the empire which France and the French, their ideas and interests, had acquired, and seemed likely to exercise over Europe. 1812, and the subsequent years, overthrew that empire, and reduced France to its normal influence and dimensions; a reaction and a counter-revolution, in the magnitude of which, the personal fortunes of the Emperor Napoleon, however interesting to the painter or romancer, are in the eye of history nothing.

It is not here intended to deny the genius of Napoleon; but this genius, it may be observed, was more of the temper of the strong and trenchant blade, which is the most powerful of instruments, than that of a great mind, evolving from

its reflections, and striking forth from the profundity of its wisdom, any great or new scheme of policy or government. That power must devolve upon the army, and be concentrated in its hands, had been for some time manifest; and it was also manifest that he who took first rank by common fame and admission in that army must be the ruler of the State: to occupy that place, Bonaparte, after his first Italian victories, evidently looked. *Faire du pouvoir*—build up renown with as few stains upon him, as possible, of the current meanness of the time, was manifestly his object, that same which drove him to Egypt in the first instance, and hurried him back from it the moment that the utmost victory was achieved, and reverses seemed the probable result of the expedition. By his acts, and by his character, Bonaparte fully obtained his first aim, that of being the first general of the army, the representative of the military interests, and the wielder of its authority. Nor was it merely his military talent which secured him this, but his great good sense, the total absence from his mind of bigotry, of fanaticism, of party spirit, of hallucination, or inveteracy of any kind. He was neither Jacobin nor Royalist. Of good birth (he was refused admission to the College of Brienne, till he showed proofs of noble birth—a strange and fatal attempt of the old system, to deny military proficiency to any man of the people), he had the tendencies, without the prejudices, of the gentleman. But what peculiarly distinguished him, and gave him power over his generation and his time, was, that he never despaired of its mission. Serving the great cause of revolution and reversal of an antiquated régime, he never looked back in terror, as did Mirabeau and Moreau, to the old monarchy, to save the country from

the results of its excesses. A weak spirit is apt to take refuge in the past, and to invoke safety in rummaging and upturning the ashes of dead things. A bold spirit trusts to the future, and does not despair of finding something good and something new. But his view of the future was limited to empire, and to the founding of that empire by arms, and by such institutions as were corollaries to arms.

At the same time, when he seized power, Bonaparte was not prepared to destroy or to ignore, more than was indispensable, all those ideas, or, at least, those semblances of free institutions, that the revolution had put forth and had essayed. Though anxious for great authority, and believing in no other mode of governing, he was desirous of obtaining not only popular adhesion, but the assistance of the men possessed of talent and experience in the country. He wanted not, indeed, their control, but their concurrence.

At the time of Napoleon's rise to supreme authority, all the experiments of political philosophy, the results of constitutional and republican experiments at mixed and popular government, were by general admission concentrated in the capacious mind of one man. This was Sieyes. He was the great Mufti of constitutional science, the great oracle of the political religion of the day. He had commenced the revolution by simply asking a question; and he had done little more since, than propound questions, without ever attempting to answer them. He was one of those lately clothed with the power of the executive, and was thus fully aware how little authority a civilian could wield without the employment of terror and proscription. Bonaparte, who knew nothing, and cared less, for constitutional systems, left the fabrication of the new machinery to

Sieyes. As the latter proceeded in his complicated work, his military colleague mocked and reproached him by turns for much that was impracticable. When Sieyes had done, however, Bonaparte accepted his handiwork, made what alterations in it he pleased, ran his pen through this representative truth, and dropped a blot of ink over that constitutional control, but accepted most of Sieyes' ideas, such as a senate and a council of state of veterans and of active functionaries, with a legislative body, which after hearing a tribunate on behalf of the people, and a councillor of the state on behalf of the government, discuss them, was to vote laws in silence.

All this complicated machinery of public bodies, and of institutions mimicking the forms of free government, served merely to give place and pay to all of that capable class who could pretend to it; thus feeing them to discard their attachment to freedom, and hiring and drilling what was really but a household of valets to wear the garb and assume the attitude of persons engaged in the real task of representative government. The advantages of a free and constitutional system are first to develop the intellect and energies of the people in their own several pursuits and occupations, and also in those where government itself requires experience and aid. This, as well as the contentment which it occasions, and the pride which it awakes in a nation, are the chief virtues of a representative government. The mimic system, invented by Sieyes, rendered still more shadowy and null by Bonaparte, has none of these advantages. It merely calls forth talent and proficiency in the one direction—the administrative and the military—and even then does not create first-rate proficiency and talent. The great statesmen, as

the great generals of Napoleon's empire, were thrown out, educated, and formed under the Republic. Those brought up under the Empire itself served but to betray it by their treachery, and disgrace it by their incapacity and their meanness.

The state machine had been, however, but a short time in motion, when it was perceived how useless, yet how obstructive, were all the wheels and inventions of Sieyes, which certainly suggested and encouraged a series of ideas, and a kind of ambition, opposed to and incompatible with the purely tyrannical spirit of a military chief. Napoleon therefore cast off the last rags of constitutionalism, in order to robe himself with the Imperial purple. Rejecting everything modern or European, Napoleon fell back to the Byzantine empire, taking its ideas and its hierarchy, its centralization and the sacrosanctity of the sovereign, as the basis of a government which he had the stupendous ignorance and folly of considering suited to Europe in the nineteenth century.

Nor was he without a flattering unguent of philosophy wherewith to varnish the monstrosity of his governmental experiment. The French, said he, and says his school, care not for liberty; all they prize is equality. As if a proud nation was better satisfied with equality, which renders a herd of men undistinguishable one from the other, or as if, indeed, equality was possible without freedom! The French rose in 1798 against a system which gave the soil and the State, with the profits of the one and the honours of both, to one class, and condemned all others to burdens and to baseness. But is a functionary aristocracy more fair than a feudal one? Is not the class which possesses wealth, influence, with all the opportuni-

ties of attracting the attention and winning the favour of the great place-bestowers, cannot this class form a monopoly as close, and one as difficult to break through, as any feudal aristocracy whatever? If there be freedom, indeed, and every subject of the State have the power, through the press, or by word of mouth, to show his claim, his fitness, his intellectual eminence, or high discernment, then, indeed, the State may boast of bestowing a certain equality; and should this freedom exist with respect to industry, it may be said, that all men and all classes have a chance for rising, as fair and as great as is compatible with the permanence of property and the defectibility of human institutions. But equality without freedom is a fallacy, of which not even Frenchmen can remain the dupes. When Napoleon, however, completed his great functionary system, there were place and scope in it for almost every Frenchman. To men of spirit the military career offered the noblest chances; to those of mercantile habits the mere supply of such vast armies was a field greater than even legitimate trade in time of peace. It was the same in every department. And the revolution scarcely conveyed a greater boon to the peasant when it flung open to him the soil, than Napoleon conferred on the middle and educated classes, when he opened to all and each a career and a profession which the State, in one way or another, was to feed and to remunerate.

But the most important characteristic of a great functionary class is the centralization which holds it together, and which effectually consecrates and embodies the principle of power emanating from above, not below. This was a portion of Napoleon's administrative arrangements far more durable than his empire, and far more important

in its consequence. For a mere form of government, like a dynasty, may disappear, and give place to another, whereas one system of administration established in the habits of a people, and extinguishing all other, becomes indispensable and ineradicable. We need only mention China as an example and a proof. And, unfortunately, that which Napoleon established is so incompatible with constitutional government, so diametrically opposed to it in principle and in working, that this centralized administration has contributed more than any other cause to prevent any constitutional system from working honestly or well, and from taking root either in the minds, hopes, and habits of the people, or in the conscience and conviction of monarch or of statesmen.

Unfortunately, the same excuses which may be alleged for Napoleon's establishment of political despotism may be urged in behalf of his centralized system of administration. The republican assemblies, when they decreed the abrogation of all powers from above, and when they sought to regulate its proceedings accruing from below, naturally made the municipal and cantonal bodies the basis of their system. And to these were given far greater authority than such bodies could honestly and effectually use. The disposal of the confiscated property of the noblesse and clergy, with the preparation of those lists of property by which taxation was measured—such duties alone flung to the local assemblies of France precisely those tasks which local interests must lead them to neglect or abuse. One of the consequences of this merging of a salutary and necessary central authority in a local one, was the suspension of all revenue in France. The republican assemblies, true to principle, had taken off the

burdens of indirect taxation, as well as abolished the monopolies, such as salt. There remained only the great source of direct taxation, land, which the government cared not so much to regulate, so long as it could coin assignats on the supposed amount of the property which had accrued to the nation. But as assignats ceased to have value, and as whatever government was installed must again resort to the old sources of both direct and indirect taxation, a reform in provincial and administrative authority was also requisite. And for the moment there could be no other than withdrawing authority from local assemblies and vesting it in the officers of government. To argue, however, as the French are in the habit of doing, from the almost inevitable abuse of those powers by the provincial bodies at a period of political and proprietorial revolution, or from the consequent laxity in fulfilling those fiscal duties—to argue from this to a total abrogation of municipal liberty or control, and to a centralization of fiscal and political power, is as irrational as it is liberticidal and impolitic.

That the French should have made light of the loss of their municipal liberties in 1799, and welcomed a more regular, though, at the same time, a more despotic administration, will not be wondered at when it is considered that after the revolution of Brumaire the public treasury had no more than would pay the couriers necessary to inform the provinces of the change. The army, writes the Duc de Gaete, was without pay, functionaries without salaries, the Church had not been paid for ten months. The public creditor, after having had two-thirds of his claims cut off, could sell his remaining third of five per cent. for no more than ten in the market. The Directory had tried to live

by forced loans, in amount progressive as private fortunes were greater. Fiscal tyranny, poverty, and incapacity had reached their maximum. The annual expenses were, in the mean time, from thirty to forty millions sterling. The revolution had, nevertheless, sufficiently simplified finance. It had destroyed all privileges, exemptions, divisions. The troubles and the wars to which it gave birth had destroyed foreign trade. The produce of the soil, and such manufactures as wrought a portion of this produce into a more valuable shape, constituted the wealth of the country. The French minister of 1811 valued the former at two hundred millions of pounds sterling brute produce, the latter at fifty millions. Of these twelve millions sterling were demanded in the shape of property-tax, and nearly eight millions more for registration and transfer duties and domains. Twenty millions sterling were thus demanded from property direct. Napoleon raised about eleven millions more by other means, between four and five millions from excise, and about four millions from customs; the rest were small items.

In such proportions was levied the Imperial revenue, which certainly weighed as heavily as the payer could afford; especially as these taxes, and the additions subsequently demanded, were paid (not, as in England, out of those private incomes and expenditure, fed even by war, and swelled by loans, but) by a class of agriculturists who had neither the capital nor the knowledge necessary to raise from the soil much more than its mere cultivators consumed, and who, moreover, were mulcted by the conscription either in hands or in heavy sums. Yet as land was the only investment for money, the only security against poverty and destitution, the price of it remained,

and indeed still remains, too exorbitant to permit agriculture to be followed as a commercial speculation. In his fiscal arrangements Napoleon not only disinherited local authorities and assemblies of all control, but adopted one of the worst habits of the old régime, by appointing receivers-general in each department, who have ever since contrived to make large profits of the sums which the receipts of the revenue bring into their hands. Napoleon appointed them for the sake of having men of moneyed or commercial mark to draw government bills upon in anticipation of the revenue. Though unnecessary, as soon as his finances were in a regular state, the receivers-general have been preserved, merely from their offering, like the old farmers-general, a lucrative and influential place for government to bestow.

The judicial and political was, of course, in accordance with the fiscal administration. Justices of peace in the country districts, a tribunal of first procedure in small towns, an imperial court in the *chef lieu*, with a tribunal of appeal in the capital, constituted a hierarchy. As prosecution of criminals was considered a duty of the State, a public accuser, with all his aids, was requisite in each court. The system of *juges d'instruction*, who performed the preliminary duties and inquiries of our grand juries, required more public law officers. These to the inferior courts were necessarily young men, poorly paid; in fact, such offices they served as apprenticeship, and looked to advancement. They became, in turn, *avocats* and *procureurs-generaux*, or judges of secondary and inferior courts. The result was, to form a class or body of Crown lawyers and judges, totally distinct from the bar, strangers to its practice, and being, from the first, in the pay of the government, to study

whose interests and consult whose will was the first duty of the legal official as of the judge. Need it be said how utterly subversive of the independence of the legal profession is this, and how entirely opposed in habits and spirit such a body of legists must be to any system of constitutional government?

Connected with Napoleon's judicial organization stands that which is considered the great civil achievement and glory of his reign—the Code. And certainly, if men were born to have no political rights and no social privileges, the French Code is, as far as regards the more plain and obvious questions disputed, a sure and equable rule. In the most complicated and difficult questions, however, the Code, like everything else, has been found obscure from very brevity, and the attempt to dispense with legal learning has failed. In trying to interpret the meaning of the Code by the intentions of its propounders, it has been found that these framers of the Code had no intentions and no profundity; that they borrowed right and left, from Justinian here and Cujas there; so that, to arrive at the real origin or purpose of a rule, it is necessary to search back into the records of the Byzantine or old French law, and thus sink once more behind the Code into the old mining depths of legal learning. Another boast of the Code is its establishment of equality for all before the law. No boast can be more untrue. The Code is merely the law of the subject and unsalaried Frenchman; but one-half of France is functionary in some way or another, and for disputes between functionaries and non-functionaries there is altogether another code and other tribunals. Nor was the feudal aristocracy of ancient days ever so completely privileged and protected by peculiar jurisdiction against the just complaints of the ignoble, as the

functionary class of French are, at the present day, privileged and protected against the common herd of French subjects whom it may please them to injure or to tread upon.

In the same narrow spirit with which he treated the law, Napoleon organized public instruction and the Church. His regulations respecting the former were a mere reversal of the large views of the Constituent Assembly; to educate the people formed no part of the system of Napoleon. His aim extended no farther than to drill the children of the middle classes in Lycées, where they soon acquired the knowledge requisite to make them apt soldiers and servile subjects, not overlearned in the classics, untainted with philosophy of any kind, and taught that the peculiar science of mathematics and physics opened the only sphere in which the intellect could be usefully exercised. One fault of his successors, indeed, he avoided; that of subjecting his school to the ecclesiastical spirit or dictation. There was nothing he took greater care to guard against than this.

Although Napoleon refused to make over public education to the clergy however, lest they should encroach beyond their sphere, and interfere with the political religion that he sought to inculcate, he did not take the true precautions against the naturally retrograde spirit of the Catholic clergy, by rendering them nationally instructed, and at least in some degree independent. In no part of his policy, indeed, was Napoleon so criminal and ungrateful to the revolution, and so opposed to its great principles, as in his dealings with the Church. In that Church, as in the State, were two parties: the one which had accepted the revolution, and adhered to its constitutional arrangement, which rendered the clergy dependant on the people and the State; the other party, like the Royalist aristocracy,

showed themselves inimical to all that had taken place since 1790. Out of the constitutional prelates and clergy Napoleon might have founded a national Church sufficiently attached to Rome to avoid schism, but sufficiently independent of it, to have made clergy and laity one people. Instead of this, Napoleon, still tinctured by his Italian education, threw overboard all that the Constituent Assembly had decreed, set aside anything like election in Church appointments, shared between his own dictatorial will and that of the Pope the nomination of the prelates, and thus abandoned the lesser clergy altogether, their education, position, and prospects, to the prelates. This constitution of a clergy, utterly distinct from the laity and its interests, and independent of their suffrages and opinions, and looking merely to the government and to Rome for support and promotion, established a Church fundamentally opposed to every idea and principle of constitutionalism. No doubt it agreed well with the Emperor's functionary hierarchy, of which it was a counterpart; but it proved, and proves, a monstrous obstruction in the way of any constitutional or even liberal system.

Whilst all professions and all classes were thus organized in a kind of hierarchy, the political administration was equally so. Under the new system, to leave a department or provincial region to itself would have been anomalous and pernicious. There was no aristocracy to be trusted, no man of property or wealth to whom the management of even local concerns could be abandoned; the Emperor was, therefore, represented in each *chef lieu* of a department by a Prefect, in each smaller one by a sub-prefect, whilst in each village government appointed a Mayor. The Prefect, well remunerated, living in a palace, was the centre of the

urban society—France knows no other; and whilst the gend'armes performed the functions of police in keeping the people quiet, or at least of discovering when they were not so, the Prefect was equally active to secure the adhesion of the better classes, or to intimidate any contrary sentiment. Such a functionary was indeed necessary under the régime of Napoleon, for the pressure of conscription and taxation weighed so heavily on the provinces, especially in the later years of the empire, that the enforcement of both with effect, yet without exciting the resistance of the population, required local administrators possessed of much address as well as firmness.

As long as parents beheld their sons run the common risks of war in a campaign upon the Danube or the Elbe, the chances, or even the inevitable bereavements, were borne with patriotism and resignation. But when not merely regiments, but armies were swallowed up in disasters, were swept down the Beresina, or entombed in the snows of Russia, mothers rebelled. Innumerable were the sums expended at times to save a favourite son from destruction. Substitutes were furnished ten times over, and were obliged to be furnished again when epidemy or a hostile bullet put an end to the substitute. The person or the price of a son registered was unpitiably demanded, even at a time when the son had died. Chateaubriand in one of his pamphlets has gibbeted the Emperor Napoleon with the clauses and the consequences of his terrible conscription law. And certainly they were sufficient to hold him up to the execration of all France. Never was a country so ruthlessly drained of its life's blood.

Such was the France that Napoleon organized into the docile instrument of his power, or the tacit audience and

admirer of his heroic deeds. Nor were his arrangements ill imagined for a reign which was to be marked by a series of victories, and which was to be but a continued fête. It is necessary, however, to provide for the storm rather than the sunshine, and to make preparation for the reverses rather than for the successes of life. And these had scarcely come upon Napoleon ere he had ample means of judging how perishing and flimsy were the foundations which he laid for the permanence of his Imperial power. Whilst still in Moscow, the conqueror of the Russian armies, but with his communications intercepted, an adventurous officer, aided by a serjeant, undertook, and wellnigh accomplished a conspiracy for dethroning the great Emperor. At night Mallet put on a general's uniform, attired his attached serjeant as an aide-de-camp, and in this garb presented himself at the barracks of several regiments in the capital, at the hotel of the Prefect, and the quarters of the commanding officer. The latter he was obliged to shoot; but all the others listened to and credited his plausible story, that the Emperor had been cut off in Russia, and was no more, and that he, Mallet, was intrusted to form a Provisional Government to dispose of the future empire of France. Not a word was said of the King of Rome or of the Imperial succession. Nor do the high functionaries of Napoleon's creation and appointment display a sign that either the Imperial régime or the Imperial dynasty was uppermost in their thoughts. The conspiracy failed through a mere chance, the escape of an officer. And Napoleon returned furious, to ask of his mystified functionaries whether the continuance of his empire depended upon his mere presence, or his name, and might be expected to

disappear the moment that name and that presence were withdrawn.

Had Napoleon left society to form its naturally independent classes, had he allowed those classes their due influence over public opinion and public affairs, by means of the press and of those free institutions which develop and express opinion, he would no doubt have experienced resistance and obstruction in his arbitrary schemes, but he would in recompense have been supported, when Europe became unjust and severe to him, by the spontaneous effort of an indignant and powerful nation. But Napoleon had blotted out the nation, had stifled its voice, and betrayed its freedom. He still, indeed, found generous and chivalrous adhesion in the remnant of his armies and in the juvenile population, which joined his shattered ranks. But beyond the sight of his military eagles there was no Imperial France. There was no mass of people, no body of citizens, no class beyond the military, which showed at that time any devotion, or were prepared for any sacrifice. Even those preferred and salaried functionaries, who held high office as mock legislators and senators, as ministers and councillors of State, had no aid to bring to their tottering sovereign, for in truth they possessed no intrinsic authority or respect. All such power, even of usefulness, flowed from the great centralized source beneath the throne, and as this was dried up, so disappeared all power, and even all loyalty and subordination. The very senators, whilst passing forced decrees for the levy of troops and the raising of contributions, were more busied in considering how they could most conveniently and decorously sacrifice the Emperor to the preservation of their own dignities, and act the part of

executioner to him and to his dynasty whilst preserving their own titles and emoluments. Never was the inevitable meanness and insufficiency of a functionary aristocracy more completely brought to proof and to light.

The Allied Sovereigns and armies which marched into France, did so with the determination to crush its military and dominating spirit. But they approached and passed the frontier of France, not only with respect, but awe, of a people, which had achieved such vast things. Had there been at the time a people, visible elsewhere than in camps, a public opinion in the habit or with the facilities of expressing itself, had there been independent bodies or assemblies accustomed to discuss and free to declare the result of their deliberations, the Allied Sovereigns would have been obliged to respect the will of the French people, and would have been delighted to have made honourable peace with civilian France. That, however, did not exist. The strength, the honour, and the majesty of the country were concentrated in its armies, and, it being unavoidable to send them beneath the yoke, the country was subjected with them to its ignominy, and the seeds of resentment and reaction sown, not those of any future harvest of peace.

CHAPTER II.

IMPERIALISM: ITS RISE AND FALL.

Whilst Napoleon was labouring to found a monarchy based upon his exploits as a soldier, his ability as an administrator, and upon the full satisfaction which he gave to the universal love of equality and of order in France, the representatives and the votaries of the exploded principle of legitimate and hereditary right, laboured to the best of their judgments and the utmost of their zeal to keep their political faith alive and their claims respected. Their first hopes were, that sentiments of goodwill and loyalty would at length prevail with the masses of the French themselves, and turn them from the crimes and the anarchy of revolutions to the resumption of the old government, and the recal of their hereditary princes. The French found more profit and more pride in continuing the revolution: and such was the violence of the long pent-up spirit of freedom, that rush onwards it must for still many years, before it will become exhausted, and that even then anything like a government or an empire must be built up of the ruins and materials which the popular torrent had swept down, and had amassed, and which

occupied the soil to the utter obliteration of all that had preceded.

Deceived in the hope of reaction in the French mind, the princes and the nobles who had emigrated turned their attention and efforts to obtain foreign aid. The courts and the governments which bordered upon the French Republic seemed, however, smitten with far greater respect for its energies and its courage, than either appalled by its crimes or moved by any chivalrous enthusiasm for the restoration of the monarchical principle. In Germany, the land of feudalism, the French noblesse might expect to have found most sympathy. But after a very brief experience of the tough resistance which was to be expected from the French, whether as republicans or soldiers, the North Germans abandoned their antagonism to the Revolution and its chiefs altogether; and even Austria, whilst continuing the war, struggled exclusively for the recovery of lost provinces, not for the re-edification of a shattered throne.

The Princes of the House of Bourbon were not endowed with the qualities fitted either to command sympathy or to awaken hope for their fortunes. Weaker men or paler characters than the three royal brothers, whom fate had placed to withstand, or be the victims of, the most violent of revolutions, it was difficult to imagine. Louis XVI. was a child in goodness, in helplessness, in irresolution,—saying little, thinking less. Shrinking from this and from every other act of manhood, he was a perfect specimen of that inane shadow in which centuries of absolute power, unbridled lust, and uncultivated intellect, in one privileged family, but too naturally terminate.

The Count de Provence, or Monsieur, as the next brother to the monarch was emphatically called, was

considered superior in capacity—and although, like a true descendant of Louis XIV., he avoided showing any symptom of that mutinous opposition, which the Duke of Orleans hazarded, he still kept aloof from the follies and extravagance of the Court, cultivating a taste for letters, and affecting, as far as was decorous and safe, the philosopher and the wit. Far too timid and too loyal to flatter the Parliament, join in its judicial malcontentism, or form connexion with the rising demagogy, Monsieur still showed himself liberal in the Committees of the Assembly of Notables, over which he presided. In these he went far enough to be considered by the Queen and the ultra-royalist partizans as no friend to the throne, yet he did not go far enough to win the confidence even of those who lent an impulse to the revolution in the hope that it would check its onward course, and settle down into some form of constitutional government.

The constitutionalists at first preferred the Duke of Orleans, as possessed of boldness at least. The pure royalists placed their hopes in the King's younger brother, the Count d'Artois, a Prince possessed of those physical advantages which his elders wanted. He was tall, graceful, handsome, fond of the chace, and when at Court had gallant adventures, sufficient to make him a reputation. One of these, which ended tragically, had such an effect upon him, as to lead to his forswearing in future any such pursuit or such connexion. The piety and virtue of the Prince, originating in such a cause, shed a certain atmosphere of romance about him. Moreover as he was equally resolute and enthusiastic in political opinions, and in his attachment to the obsolete monarchy, which was perishing before his eyes, as well as to the aristocratic

cause, with which it was indissolubly linked, the Count d'Artois was considered the Prince Rupert of the French Revolution, one at least who would flush his sabre in offering resistance, nor yield till he had fought and bled. With such sentiments and such a reputation the Count d'Artois left Versailles with the first batch of emigrants.

The army of Condé was already formed, and Europe at war with France, before the Comte de Provence thought it advisable to escape from the Palace of the Luxembourg. The Prince has left an account of his escape, penned by his afterwards royal hand. It is remarkable for the almost womanly tenderness expressed towards his friend d'Avaray, the horror which he avowed for a family dinner, and the inimitably expressive remark of an old woman, to the coarseness and colour of whose bread the fat and Epicurean Prince objected, "*Mangez en*," said she, "*cela vous dégraissera.*"

The Counts of Provence and of Artois agreed as little in exile as at their brother's court. Proud of having run away from the very first menaces of the Revolution, the nobles and princes thus distinguished looked down upon those whose exile was of later date, and deemed that to have awaited for necessity was a disgrace, not an excuse.

The chivalrous nobles rallied round the Count d'Artois. Those of the exiles, who pretended to the calm and gravity of politicians, followed the Count de Provence. Unfortunately the politicians had no policy, and the cavalier princes little chivalry. Their first years of exile in common were spent in squabbles with each other, and in disputes about their respective dignities, rather than in intelligible plans for either overcoming the resistance or even earning the respect of the French.

In January, 1793, the unfortunate Louis XVI. perished on a revolutionary scaffold. His young son, still a prisoner in the Temple, succeeded, in the eyes of the exiles, to the title of Louis XVII.; but it seemed requisite that, at least during his minority, his uncles, who were at liberty, as well as of mature years, should assume some title indicative of their authority and pretensions. Deep dissensions prevailed between their partisans on this subject; and they had recourse to foreign princes to decide the weighty matter. All declined the task as invidious and idle. At length the compromise was made by declaring Monsieur, Regent of France, and his brother, the Count d'Artois, Lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

The title assumed indicated the purpose of military effort; but the German princes were not enthusiastic to second it: and the Lieutenant-general learning the chivalrous sentiments of Catherine II. Empress of Russia, for the re-establishment of the French monarchy and its royal race, repaired to St. Petersburg. He was cordially received by the Empress; not so cordially by her ministers, who seemed indisposed to trust a military force to the guidance of the Prince. They were, however, sufficiently lavish of promises; and as he was anxious to return, in order to bring the assurances of Russian aid to his comrades, a day was fixed for his departure, and his audience of leave was arranged with great solemnity. The Empress Catherine, surrounded by her Court, advanced to the Prince, holding in her hand a valuable sword, which had received priestly benediction in the Cathedral of St. Petersburg. This sword the Empress presented to her guest, with the observation that she only gave it in the persuasion that he would sooner perish

than defer to make use of it. The Count d'Artois begged the Empress to entertain no doubt upon such a subject; yet even this was said in such a tone that Prince Esterhazy, being asked by the Count de Vauban, both of whom were present, what he thought, the Austrian replied, that "there was infinite grandeur in the Empress, but as for the Comte d'Artois, he received the sword like one who certainly would make no use of it." The remark proved true, as far as the blade was concerned, but the diamond hilt was sold not long after to a London Jew, for the sum of four thousand pounds sterling.

The present of a sword, without troops or supplies, made too by a powerful and wealthy sovereign, might warrant the French Prince in not making use of what was but a valuable bauble. The English Government, however, offered the Count d'Artois a noble opportunity of wielding and employing Catherine's gift. The first insurrection of La Vendée was over; it had terminated in a great measure because unsupported by the presence of a French Prince. The English Government resolved to reawaken the insurrection, and offered to equip and to convey a large body of *émigrés* to the coast of France. Ten thousand of them were landed at Quiberon; whilst the Count d'Artois, then Monsieur, was conveyed on board the Jason frigate, within view of another part of the coast, where the gallant Vendeans awaited his landing. Courage, however, failed the Prince, at the moment of trying a soldier's fortune on the soil of France. He refused to trust his person on shore, met with evasion the exhortations of those who came on board to press his landing, and at last returned to England in the Jason, to the indignation of Lord Grenville, and to the despair of the Vendeans, who had

risen a second time purely in hopes of his Royal Highness's presence. "Make efforts for such people!" exclaimed Lord Grenville to the Austrian and Russian envoys. The Vendean chief, Charette, proclaimed his sentiments in a letter to Louis XVIII. It was as follows:—

SIRE,

THE cowardice of your brother has lost all. Appearing upon these shores, there was for him but the alternatives of winning everything or throwing all away. His return to England has decided our fate. There now remains nothing for us but to perish uselessly for the service of your Majesty.

CHARETTE.

Charette, who was taken prisoner a few months later, amidst the total discomfiture of his cause, was shot at Nantes. Some of the friends of the Count d'Artois have sought to excuse his pusillanimity by stating the objections which he entertained to M. de Puisaye and to Charette himself, as royalists not without liberal or constitutional ideas, more inclined to the Count de Provence than himself. The Prince even compared M. de Puisaye to Robespierre, so incapable was he of appreciating any loyalty which did not sink to servility. His royalism was a religion, which he thought heresy to inoculate with a particle of liberalism or freedom.

Whilst the Count d'Artois was thus flinging cold water on the burning heroism of La Vendée, Monsieur was coquetting with the federative movements of the south of France. That noble protest against the tyranny and criminal ascendancy of Paris might have had some chance of success, had not the royalists flung themselves into the

cause, and perverted it so as to disgust even the friends of moderate liberty. Such mean and foolish efforts of the royalists to creep back to power and existence under a republican disguise, resulted merely in sending the Girondists to the scaffold, and in affording the first field to the military greatness of Napoleon. Had not Toulon been to be conquered, a young artillery officer might have long waited such another opportunity of distinguishing himself.

The death of the hapless Dauphin furnished the Count de Provence with authority for carrying on the war of conspiracy and intrigue. This event took place in June, 1795; and his uncle, then residing at Verona, instantly assumed the title of Louis XVIII., King of France and Navarre, and published a proclamation, announcing his accession to the throne, in language far more insulting than conciliatory to the French nation.

"The impenetrable decrees of Providence," said the new monarch, "have transmitted to us, with the crown, the necessity of rescuing it from revolt. Impious and factious men have dragged you into irreligion and insurrection, from which moment a deluge of calamities has overwhelmed you. Unfaithful to the God of your fathers, that God, justly provoked, has made you feel the weight of his anger. You were unfaithful to the authority which he established to govern you; a sanguinary despotism, alternating with a no less cruel anarchy, have torn you unceasingly with a rage which does not abate. Your property became the prey of brigands, at the same moment that the throne fell into the hands of usurpers. Servitude and tyranny have not ceased to oppress you since the throne no longer covered you with its ægis. Property, security, liberty, have all disappeared with the government

of the monarchy. Return to that holy religion which brought down upon France the blessings of Heaven. Re-establish that government, which, for fourteen centuries, was the glory and the delight of the French, which made your country the most flourishing of States, and yourselves the happiest of people. Every Frenchman, who abjures pernicious opinions, may cast himself at the foot of the throne, and be received there. There are crimes, indeed, whose atrocity passes the bounds of clemency. Those monsters, the regicides, will be named by posterity with horror. All France calls upon those heads the sword of justice."

M. de Polignac might himself have written this first emanation from the royalty of Louis XVIII., so unlike in its exaggeration to the maturer sentiments of the Prince. But Robespierre had not long fallen. There was a strong reaction in Paris of the educated, and even of the burgess class, against the democracy of the streets and the clubs. Amongst the amnestied exiles, many royalists had returned, who were provided with money by governments interested in a royalist restoration; and that a successful movement for that purpose would take place, was the daily hope of the little Court of Verona. The attempt was made. Some of the boldest engaged the armed citizens in their sections to imitate the previous tactics of the populace, and march upon the Tuileries. A few cannon-shot, directed by General Bonaparte, sufficed to disperse them, and with them the hope of the Bourbons. Victorious in Paris, Bonaparte then took the command in Italy. Alarmed by his victories, the Venetian Senate begged Louis XVIII. to remove his Court from Verona.

"Give me the golden book," rejoined Louis XVIII., "that I may erase from it the name of my family from

the Patriciale of Venice; and restore me the suit of armour, which my ancestor, Henry IV., presented to your republic."

In the spring of 1796, the King abandoned Italy for the Rhine, whither he was not only driven by necessity, but attracted by negotiations, wellnigh concluded between the royalists and General Pichegru. The latter promised to hoist the white flag, and march with such of the troops as would follow it, and with the corps of emigrants, to Paris. The Prince of Condé, however, would not trust Pichegru, or act secondary to him, which would alone have defeated the project, even if Pichegru could have accomplished what he proposed. The government in Paris cut short the military plot by the recal of Pichegru. The general did not despair of accomplishing, as a civilian and as a member of the representative body, that restoration which he had failed to effect by the sword. He accepted the task, but accompanied his acceptance by protesting against the apparent design of the emigrants to restore the old absolutism of the Bourbons. To this the King replied with some political jesuistry, and drew up a proclamation to suit Pichegru's purposes, in which the word *constitution* was mentioned, but it was a constitution of the old hereditary, not the new English model.

"We enjoined our agents," said Louis XVIII., "to recal our people to the holy religion of our fathers, and to the paternal government which was so long the glory of France. Explain to them the constitution of the State, which has been calumniated because it was misunderstood. Distinguish what it was originally from what was more recently introduced. Show that it was as remote from despotism as from anarchy. Consult the enlightened as to

how it may be perfected, and announce the government by which it may be ameliorated."

To comprehend this jargon, it must be borne in mind, that the French were constitution-mongering at this epoch; that they were very much disgusted with the republic, with its popular sovereignty, and with the results which they had produced; but, at the same time, that they were far too proud, and had too grandiose an idea of their own capacity and originality, to admit the necessity of borrowing principles or systems of government from England. Constitutional monarchy had been invented by England, and consequently neither royalist nor republican would have it. The few, such as Madame de Stael, Messrs. de Montmorency and de Narbonne, were really unpopular, because they preferred to borrow the only possible form of free government from England; and because England was a constitutional monarchy, the French were determined to be something else. That something else they became in 1800, and that something else they have again become in 1853. It remains to be seen whether prudent imitation be not better than foolish originality.

A number of liberal and moderate men in France were agreed, that the first requisite for a stable government was the restoration of a Bourbon Prince. There was then, in truth, prospect of no other: and who could look to such rulers as Barras and Lepaux? A Bourbon Prince once more upon the throne, his government could not but be weak enough to allow of the establishment of some popular or constitutional control. The best men of the time, therefore, combined to bring about a royalist restoration. Nor was it far from success. It had a majority in the Assemblies; it counted in its ranks general officers of

renown; the voice of the citizens, as well as the educated and upper class of the capital and provinces were for it. The plot, of which Pichegru was the chief, was on the very point of accomplishment. It was fixed for the 18th Fructidor, when one, entrusted with the secret by the emigrant Court of Louis XVIII., betrayed it, and caused its defeat. The Duke of Carency, son of the Duke de Vauguyon, who was foreign minister and ambassador of Louis XVIII., was at the time in Paris, living in debauchery, and embarrassed with debt. A sum of money, and the solicitations of a mistress greedy of money, induced the Duke of Carency to betray the scheme and its accomplices to the Director Barras. He and his colleagues lost no time in counteracting it. Augereau and his republican regiments were called in to seize on the gates and chief posts of Paris, and on the night of the 17th to the 18th, the *coup d'état* of Fructidor was consummated by the arrest of all concerned in the royalist restoration. Fifty deputies, directors, and journalists were transported to Cayenne, and the hopes and the efforts of the royalists were drowned this time, not in blood, but in ridicule and disgrace.

Henceforth the Bourbons, with ample cause, despaired of effecting any revolution in their favour by means of public opinion, or by the influence of the middle or educated classes. These had displayed their powerlessness to contend with the military and dictatorial spirit of the day. The resource of continental aid was at the same time taken from them. Bonaparte dictated the terms of the treaty of Campo Formio, and Louis XVIII. was obliged to remove his person and his Court from the Elbe, as he had done from the Adige and the Rhine. Mittau, in the Duchy of Courland, within the dominions of the Emperor of Russia,

became his residence. The means of livelihood were furnished by the Russian Court, to the amount of 24,000*l.* a-year, to which the Court of Madrid added between 3,000*l.* and 4,000*l.* Fortune seemed to offer a gleam of hope, by the cessation of hostilities, which rendered the military spirit apparently less predominant in France, which even sent beyond sea the most republican legions and officers of the army under the redoubtable Bonaparte, and which delivered the destinies of France into the hands of a needy, despotic, and well-born adventurer.

The folly of the royalist agents in having depended upon Pichegru exclusively, and in not having tried to win over Director Barras, became evident, when this personage, in all the pride of his triumph and supremacy, received with eagerness the offers of the Bourbon emissary.

In crushing the royalists by the *coup d'état* of Fructidor, Barras and his colleagues conceived the hope that a civilian government might still administer the affairs of France, independent of military dictation. They got rid of Bonaparte and his army in order to try the experiment; and Bonaparte sailed to Egypt with his army, partly to allow them to try the experiment and fail,—and fail most egregiously they did. Although they had Talleyrand, and Carnot, and Fouché, and Sieyes, with the entire of the civilian talent and experience which remained true to the revolution, the Directorial Government was incapable of organizing even an administration of the provinces. They had grasped absolute power in Fructidor, had gagged the press, intimidated any opposition which rose above intrigue or chicane, yet they could not govern, could not maintain respect, or establish authority. Finances could not be said to exist; they declared two-thirds (that is, two *mil-*

liards) of the public debt cancelled, yet they were quite as remote as ever from paying the interest of the remaining third. Forced and progressive loans did not furnish wherewithal to equip the armies, which, low in confidence, as in equipment and sustenance, were driven back in discomfiture to the frontiers of France. Russia and Austria had again rushed to arms. There were but two modes of saving France from ruin,—to throw its whole government, fortune, and resources into the hands of a military chief, who could carry on the war, or else to make peace abroad, and put an end to faction at home by a Bourbon restoration. Barras preferred the latter, which he had defeated in Fructidor. He made terms, and they were granted to him in the following letters-patent:—

"General Paul de Barras, having consented to re-establish the French monarchy in the person of Louis XVIII., indemnity and security are pledged to him in return. The King engages his sacred word to interpose his authority against any accusation or prosecution of General Barras for his opinions or his votes. Moreover, he promises an indemnity equal to two years of the salary and profits of the Director, estimated at twelve millions of *livres-tournois*, not comprising two millions destined to accomplish the revolution."

Such a natural death was the republic about to die, in 1799, from the despair of those intrusted with the government, as well as from the progress of its enemies in the field, when Bonaparte returned from Egypt. To turn out Barras and his colleagues was a matter of such facility, that it can scarcely be called a revolution; and to follow the example of the Directory, in expelling the opponents of the change from the Representative Assemblies, which

had witnessed and participated in the imbecility and incapacity of such governors, can scarcely be considered as either a novelty or a crime. The Bourbon agents, who followed, as it were, the scent of power, as it escaped from one person or party to become vested in another, lost no time in applying to General Bonaparte, as they had done to Pichegru and to Barras. "As long as I hold the government," replied Bonaparte, honestly and frankly, "the Bourbons have no chance of coming back. Had I known of the letters-patent of Barras, I would have had him shot with them pinned upon his breast." Subsequent attempts of royalist agents upon this personage were attended with as little effect: and the reports depict him, with great sagacity and fidelity, as a man "bent upon pursuing a solitary path, not to wealth, or to title," but, as he expressed himself, "to glory and immortality."

It were well for the royalist party, if their next efforts for the resurrection of their cause could be passed over in silence. But the truth unfortunately is, that when it became hopeless either to resist the government, which Bonaparte was founding, by armies in the field, or to seduce it by all the proffers which legitimacy could make, the partisans of the discomfited cause had recourse to means as desperate as dishonourable: and the taking away the life of the First Consul became the starting point of every movement and of every plot. The degeneration of the gallant and open resistance of the Vendeans into the more individual, desperate, and unscrupulous attempts of bands of Chouans, produced for royalism a number of dangerous and reckless characters, who might have been bold leaders, with a people or a peasantry to follow them; but who, reduced to the efforts of their single arms, or at most to

the support of a few determined followers, were but too naturally brought to narrow their military tactics to daring attempts at abduction or assassination. It is difficult to say how far the Princes of the House of Bourbon countenanced such schemes. They were ignorant, no doubt, of such criminal machinations as the explosion of the infernal machine; but as royalist agents were at the bottom of the attempt, and as English money was frequently placed at the disposal of these agents, very great obloquy came to rest in the French public mind, both upon the Bourbons and upon the kind of support afforded them by the British Government.

Nor was this disgust confined to the French. The Emperor Paul of Russia also soon entertained similar feelings. Some disgrace to his arms, with certain causes of grievance given him by the English, coupled with the criminal attempt of the infernal machine, induced this monarch to stretch out the hand of amity to Bonaparte, and at the same time to expel from Mittau in the midst of winter Louis XVIII. and his relatives. The daughter, and then only surviving child, of the unfortunate Louis XVI. and of Marie Antoinette, had been liberated from the prison of the Temple, and allowed to join her relatives at Mittau. The first use made of her liberty was to marry her to the Duke d'Angoulême, son of the Count d'Artois, and consequently her own first cousin. The Archduke Charles of Austria had asked her in marriage; but it was not the good fortune of the captive of the Temple to espouse that hero, who was afterwards the worthy rival of Napoleon at Aspern and Wagram. Flying from the capricious anger of the Emperor Paul, the Bourbon Princes took refuge first in Prussia, which only consented to receive them on the pro-

mise of wearing no royal title, and making no effort at restoration. None of his prefects could be more obsequious at that time to the French ruler than the King of Prussia. Louis XVIII. removed to Warsaw. And here it was that the President of the Polish Diet, whether moved by Prussia, or of his own accord, imagining he should do a service to France, made the formal proposal to Louis XVIII. to renounce the crown of France for himself and his family, on the condition of receiving in return a handsome pecuniary indemnity or allowance. Bonaparte denied having ever sanctioned any one to make such an offer. But as he was meditating at the same time his elevation to the empire, and as he was carefully inquiring how the other Courts of Europe would receive or recognise an Emperor thus fabricated, it is more than probable that he directed the proposal to be made, the acceptance of which by the Bourbons could not but have favoured Napoleon's intentions and facilitated his recognition by Europe.

Louis XVIII. made the following reply :—

"I do not confound Bonaparte with his predecessors. I even thank him for many acts of his administration. The good that is done for my people must be dear to me. But he mistakes in thinking he can induce me to make any compromise of my rights. On the contrary, such a step taken by him confirms those rights. I am ignorant of the designs of Providence with respect to me and my race; but I feel the obligations imposed upon me together with my rank; as a Christian, I will fulfil those obligations to my last breath. A son of St. Louis I can, like him, respect myself, and I will make myself respected, even in irons. The successor of Francis I., I must

keep it in my power to say like him, 'All is lost, save honour.' "

As the ambition and power of Napoleon grew, and as it became each day more evident that the force of the government and the system which he was founding was concentrated in his person, the projects of assassination, baffled in the attempt of the infernal machine, were renewed. Georges Cadoudal, the Chouan, and originator of that plot, returned to Paris in 1803, with similar intentions. Pichegru came back also. General Moreau was sounded, and did not show himself averse to a scheme for overthrowing the government of Bonaparte, although he doubted whether the Bourbons could be established in his place. The police got wind of the plot. The chief conspirators, Pichegru and Georges, were seized. The latter confessed that he had come to Paris to *attack* the First Consul, and to employ personal violence. He thus disguised assassination under the plea of open war. The exasperation of Napoleon was such that he too had recourse to the same unworthy subterfuge of covering assassination under the plea of war. He caused the Duc d'Enghien, the only issue of the Condés, to be seized in a neutral country, to be hurried to Vincennes and shot, although the Prince demanded an interview with the First Consul, no doubt trusting to his generosity as a soldier.

The defiance cast to the Bourbons and to legitimacy by such an act, was followed by something more conclusive, the elevation of Napoleon to the empire, the Pope himself presiding at the ceremony of coronation, and not a few of the ancient noblesse accepting offices and dignities at the new Court. The creation of an empire, with the principle of hereditary succession restored, was considered

necessary to put an extinguisher on the ambition of the revolutionists. It was also rendered necessary by the scheme of establishing a sort of suzerainty over a great portion of Europe, the ruler of France, like another Charlemagne, imposing his policy and communicating his orders to subordinate monarchs. This again was rendered indispensable by the necessity of arraying Europe against England. The new pretensions begot resistance and war, war in which the Emperor triumphed, and which, rendering him victorious even over Russia, obliged Louis XVIII. not only to bid adieu to the Continent but to abandon the assumption of the royal title. The Bourbon Princes, like all the sovereigns of Europe, saw in the military supremacy which Napoleon was establishing over Europe a new foundation of empire which nothing could shake. They all, following the example of Napoleon himself, considered the people of Europe as nothing, and as not more than the people of France. Napoleon had made light of his own, and made no account of the other. The Kings and Courts which he crushed, did not look further or more profoundly; nor did they see any chance in the future of escaping from that iron rule which extended over them. All the Continent, therefore, turned its back upon the Bourbons. The brother Princes, in this extremity of their affairs, met at a remote town in Sweden, almost on the confines of Europe. In this interview Louis XVIII. represented to his brother that no hopes any longer existed of their restoration by virtue of the pure monarchical principle, which, forgotten by the people, was equally despaired of by the other sovereigns of Europe, who worshipped nothing but force, who bowed the knee before the usurper of the French throne, and did not shrink from giving their

daughter to him as consort. There was no longer any hope from Europe, none from the French people, none from the French noblesse, who had crowded into the Imperial antechambers, none from that holy religion which the Count d'Artois especially invoked, but whose chief did not shrink from proceeding to crown the modern Charlemagne—all these principles and parties, upon which the Count d'Artois had leaned, and which he, Louis XVIII. had striven to employ and conciliate, had failed. The exiled King argued, that only one party remained to appeal to, and to trust in, the constitutional party, that of the educated, the independent, yet anti-aristocratic class of French, to whom the task of founding and restoring something like a government in France sooner or later must revert. To this proposal, based upon the principles of true wisdom, the Count d'Artois replied by contempt. He refused to join in any such proclamation, or expression of principle, as Louis proposed; all he would consent to, was to refrain from protesting against any promises which the King might publicly make. Deterred by the stupid zeal of his brother, Louis confined himself to an idle and insignificant protest against the empire, and hastened to bury himself in a retreat in England, where, estranged from politics or intrigue, he might await such chances as time and events should develop. Even in England, Louis met only with incivility and mistrust. An order from Mr. Canning bade the vessel which brought the Royal fugitive repair to Edinburgh, instead of coming to any southern port. Louis refused to be thus thrust into a corner, although he agreed to assume merely the title of Count of Lille, and to refrain from any active steps to recover the throne. On these conditions he was allowed to reside tranquilly in Buck-

inghamshire, at Gosfield Hall first, and afterwards at Hartwell.

When the Bourbons thus laid aside in despair the task of restoring the ancient monarchy, Napoleon himself took it up by setting about the ruin of all the supporters of his own empire. Having blotted Prussia from the map of Europe, married an Archduchess, and still retaining Austria in the rank of a subject kingdom, Napoleon abolished the remaining vestiges of freedom in France. And thus trusting solely to his army, neglecting popular support at home, and in despair of any popular opinion abroad, he flung his soldiers, amounting with the auxiliaries to a million of men, into the heart of the Russian empire, not to conquer it (that he did not pretend to do, nor even to dismember it, for he shrunk carefully from the least appearance of restoring Poland), but simply to reduce Alexander to the subordinate position of the Austrian and the Prussian monarchs. The result was the loss of his veteran army, of his undisputed claims to dictatorship at home, and of his suzerainty over Germany. Could he have abandoned or modified prudently or seasonably one or the other, he might no doubt have prolonged his reign. But he knew not how to bow to either exigency. In the campaigns, which followed after his defeat in 1813, Napoleon still showed himself superior in military power and resources to Russia and Prussia combined. From Lutzen and Bautzen he drove them before him, and although he had no cavalry to convert their defeat into rout, he still compelled the Russians to meditate a retreat into Poland, in order to reorganize their army, and reduced even the boldest Prussians to despair.* Napoleon

* See Baron Muffling's book.

had but to conciliate Austria, to come to an accord with the one Prince, his father-in-law, by yielding that portion of his pretensions, which rendered him dominant over central Europe, but which in truth were of no real use to France, except in a contest with England. Yet by making peace with the Continent he reduced England, situated as was its ministry, its finances, and its public affairs, to the necessity of peace. He would not, however, abandon his dream of enacting Charlemagne, that dream which was antagonistic to, and incompatible with, the resumption of its old power and position by Austria. He braved its enmity rather than accept its equal terms of friendship. And Austria joining Prussia and Russia crushed him finally and irrecoverably at Leipzic.*

When the chief of the Bourbon family, in the meeting with his brother at Calmar, previous to his retirement into England, believed that all hopes of active co-operation in France towards the restoration of the family were past, he still did not despair of the future. All the nobles, all the zealots, all the men of his party might forsake it. But the ideas and the principle would survive, he thought, as well as the necessities be reproduced, from which legitimacy might again resuscitate, though allied with the more advanced and liberal wants of the age. In such belief and such sentiment Louis XVIII. was perfectly correct, for however vain to conspire against a government so vigilant and so powerful, still it was too oppressive not to generate hatred and resistance, and these sentiments, at least in the educated classes, could scarcely take any other form than constitutional Royalism. Nor was opposition altogether ex-

* For Austria's conduct on this occasion see the account of Narbonne's mission, in Villemain's "Souvenirs."

tinguished. Denied the power of speech by the gagging of the Tribunate and the prohibition of all political discussion, opposition showed itself where the spirit of intellectual independence naturally takes refuge, in the sanctuary of letters. In vain were the printed works of De Stael piled in a mortar; in vain was Chateaubriand by turns menaced and cajoled; useless were the efforts made to enlist Ducis and Delille amongst the muses of Imperialism; the highest literary geniuses of Napoleon's time maintained an attitude of blame and alienation, scorning to become his servitors, even whilst abandoning as idle the duty of protest and of resistance.

Strange as it may appear, Napoleon himself was obliged to support, and was led to employ many writers, whose aims and principles were strongly opposed to his. When he restored the Pope and the French clergy, his hope was to rally to him the religious and philosophic partisans of monarchy. But there also existed a literary and philosophic school, born of the Revolution, or rather parent of it, the ideas of which were derived from the wits and writers of the eighteenth century, from those who had dethroned religion, overthrown the Church, scouted the philosophy which allied with them, and which had popularised, not proved, a system of materialism, consisting in the belief of all things seen, plain and habitual, and in a negation of all that was spiritual, either in man's nature or in that of the universe.

The convictions, or rather the speculations, of Napoleon, wavered between these two diametrically opposed systems of creed and of philosophy. A conscientious examination of their comparative worth and truth was not in his character. To whatever would have seconded or

been attached to him cordially, he would in recompense have bestowed full favour. But neither school of philosophy was prepared to disavow all other hopes and allegiance than his, however both were willing to flatter and make use of his power as a temporary support. Both philosophies, indeed, aspired to freedom, freedom at least of opinion and expression. Napoleon eyed with suspicion the tendencies of both. The philosophy of the eighteenth century had produced the Revolution, and had reigned predominant in its first assemblies. However oblivious of liberty for a time such a school might be, in favour of a man who humbled Europe and reduced it to the feet of that power which the Revolution had raised up, it could never sit long in satisfaction and alliance with a military dictator, who not only made war upon books and upon thought, but who had restored the priesthood to its ancient place.

In order, therefore, to counterbalance the disciples of Voltaire he took by the hand the more moderate of those who upheld a spiritual philosophy, and who joined to it a monarchical idea in politics. Of this school were De Maistre, Chateaubriand, Bonald, and Fontanes. Napoleon was eager to employ them, if they showed anything like attachment to his government; and they in their turn were not indisposed to show a certain amount of gratitude and attachment, as far as the acts and the tyranny of the Imperial government would permit. After the catastrophe of the Duc d'Enghien, Chateaubriand, then envoy in the Valais, refused to serve Napoleon any longer. Fontanes, himself, then grand-master of the university, having been reported in the *Moniteur* as approving in one of his speeches the recent measures of the government,

was horrified, as the word *measures* included the death of the Duc d'Enghien. His approbation had been bestowed expressly on the *laws* recently promulgated. Fontanes, at the risk of displeasing Napoleon, insisted on an *erratum*, substituting *Laws* for *Measures*, being inserted in the *Moniteur*.

One of the most decided acts of Napoleon in favour of the religious-philosophic school was the nomination of Fontanes to be head of the university. Fontanes, the friend of Chateaubriand and Bonald, made use of his influence to introduce into the university the principal men of the religious school, such as Bonald himself, M. de Beausset, Frayssinous. He only obtained the latter nomination after six months' efforts with the Emperor, who, to counteract the Church tendencies of the grand-master, insisted on the nomination of the followers of Voltaire, such as Arnauld, Fourcroy, and Laromiguiere.

This combat of the sensualist and spiritualist, of the revolutionary and the monarchic, writers and thinkers was carried on, not merely in the university, but in the press, fallen and menaced as it was. The *Journal des Débats* was the organ in which the Royalist contrived to fling his javelin at the Revolutionist. Napoleon so far permitted this, as to pay largely the editor, M. Fievée, not only for writing in moderate support of his opinion in the *Débats*, but for corresponding directly and secretly with himself, by which the Emperor hoped to be in possession of the secret views of a party, which he dreaded whilst he patronised. At last the Emperor saw through the full hostility which was covered with so much talent, and such a show of moderation. "These men," said he,

"are leading the way to a monarchy, different from that which it is my intention to found." The editorship of the *Journal des Débats* was accordingly taken from Fievée, and given to the Voltairian Etienne, whilst, not to extinguish the religious monarchists, the *feuilleton*, or literary and critical portion of the journal, transferred to the *Journal de l'Empire*, was left in the hands of Geoffroy and the anti-Voltairians.

Whilst in literature and in the university the Royalist cause was thus kept alive, it also, as may well be supposed, survived or became resuscitated amongst the clergy. These, too, like their lay friends, were inclined to be grateful to the French Consul and Emperor for having restored them to influence and avenged them of the Jacobins. But the ecclesiastical, no more than the philosophical, could bring themselves to believe in the permanence of the government or the dynasty, which seemed to place its sole intrinsic reliance in itself and in the brute force of its soldiers, making use at the same time of the republican and the Royalist, the materialist and the religionist, to be the instruments and servitors of a power based upon no principle whatever, but upon force and the necessities of the moment.

Napoleon himself soon perceived that he had been mistaken in the hope of forming for himself a party in the Church. At first, and for a time, he allowed eminent doctors and preachers the same liberty in their schools and churches which he allowed to M. Fievée in the *Journal des Débats*. Under favour of this protection Frayssinous opened his famous conferences at St. Sulpice, whither the studious youth of the universities were attracted, and where many of these were won over from the scoffing and mate-

rialist opinions of the day, to the opposite extreme of resigning their reason at the altar of religious faith. The police, however, which meddled with everything, soon found fault with the enthusiastic sentiments kindled by the preaching and teaching of the divine. It was signified to M. Frayssinous that he was not orthodox. "In what have I sinned against orthodoxy?" asked the Christian preacher. "You have neither pronounced the eulogium of the Emperor nor proved the righteousness of the law of conscription," replied Fouché. M. Frayssinous, with flexible spirit, returned thanks from the pulpit for that beneficent power which had upreared the altars of religion in France; but this was not enough. Napoleon at the time quarrelled with the Pope and began to mistrust the clergy; Frayssinous was silenced and Fontanes dismissed. After a brief trial of the effect of allowing some little liberty to the press, the pulpit, and the professorial chair, Napoleon found that none could give him influence, approval, or support, and that in pretending to work for his tyranny they in reality undermined it. And he was right; his sceptre was a sword-blade, which mere exposure to the open air of free discussion and opinion oxidised and destroyed.

Such was the mutism established and the discontent sown, amidst all the intellectual, educated, and pious of the French, when Napoleon marched with his legions to subdue Russia. Painful, therefore, as were the tidings of his great disaster, they came not unattended by a ray of hope. If the pride of conquest was to be humbled, intellect might hope for emancipation and freedom for yet another birth. Unfortunately these natural and noble feelings of the educated French were not shared by the peasant and the popular class. The people saw but the humiliation

of the national pride, the reversal of its conquests, the overthrow of its ascendancy, all summed up and represented by Napoleon. Some mothers, indeed, of the humblest, as of the highest rank, may have felt sore at the bereavements of the conscription; some lingering germ of Royalism in the west, as of Papism in the south, may have excited disaffection, but by the mass of the uneducated French, and even by the more generous spirits of the young of the middle class, Napoleon was still the hero, and his fall was marked and lamented as that of the country.

Here then recommenced what had been, and what was still to be, the greatest curse of France, and the greatest obstacle in the way of the freedom and happiness of that country—a deep schism between the educated and the uneducated, the first of whom aspired to freedom as the best fruit of the Revolution, whilst the second could entertain no other thoughts than those of conquest and defeat, glory and humiliation. On his return from the disaster of Leipzic, and the escape of Hanau, Napoleon felt the indecorum and impossibility of not communicating the broken state of public affairs both to the people at large and to the only popular body. The bulletins of the day admitted his reverses. The Senate and the Legislative Body were convoked in December, 1813, for the purpose of receiving communications respecting the peace which the Allies proposed. The last conditions offered were to restrict France within what they were pleased to call its *natural** limits—the Alps and the Rhine.

Whatever contempt Napoleon may have had for representative bodies, he at least now confessed that they had a

* See the Castlereagh Correspondence for proofs of the English disgust at Alexander's use of the term.

use, and might become a necessity. He foresaw the possibility of the Allies pressing upon him so severely that his only safety would be in an appeal to all Frenchmen and to every class. How was this to be done, if what was called the Legislative Body was unconsulted? Napoleon, in the *Moniteur*, on a memorable occasion, had denied that the Legislative Body represented the nation. It represented merely the departments, he argued; he, the Emperor, alone represented the nation. Such flimsy sophisms were soon brushed away, even by himself, when he needed the support of aught approaching a representative body. Napoleon assembled them, yet showed his distrust and dread of them in so doing. They had still the right of choosing their president. He sent one of his young ministers, M. Molé, to tell them that, lest they should choose a president ignorant of Imperial etiquette, he would provide them with one in the person of the Duke of Massa. The Legislative Body replied by electing, as the members of the Commission who were to examine and draw up a report on the State communication, the most talented and independent men of their body. These men, Lainé, Raynouard, Gallois, Maine de Biran, and Flanquerques, represented fully the educated and thinking class of French, those who had not forgotten the traditions of freedom, the struggles of the revolution, and all the rights and aspirations which Napoleon had so ruthlessly confiscated and stifled.

And yet they were far from thinking that Napoleon could be personally removed, or that it was necessary to overthrow him, in order to arrive at constitutional monarchy. M. Raynouard himself declared, that the Legislative Body ought to make such an answer to the

Emperor's communication as would make the war national, should peace be refused by the Allies. This was what Napoleon desired. But Raynouard, in the Commission, explained what he meant by peace, when he declared that "peace was impossible unless Europe was assured that there should be no more oppression." If the spirit of the Gironde showed itself in Raynouard, it was more conspicuous in Lainé, who declared "it was necessary to raise up the Legislative Body, to make the cry of the people for peace be heard, as well as the groans excited by oppression."

This was more than enough to alarm Napoleon. Fouché, the police minister, received his orders, and he summoned the members of the Commission, in order to acquaint them with the opinions of the Emperor.

"If there are Frenchmen," Napoleon said, "who seek to come to terms with the Bourbons" (so sharp-sighted was he in descrying the tendencies of men), "let them try. But I promise them, we shall fight many a battle of Ivry."

Savary also reproached Lainé with a leaning to the Bourbons, and asked him, "What was his aim or his desires?" "My aim," replied Lainé, "is to save my country, or at least to breathe forth the last sigh of liberty!"

"Liberty," replied Savary, "is under the safeguard of the Emperor."

"The Emperor," said Lainé, "ought to extend his hand to a prostrate country, and to raise it up."

"This is to be thought of, when peace has been obtained," rejoined Fouché. "The Bourbons would sacrifice the national honour, and be contented with a kingdom in Aquitaine."

The report drawn up by the five members of the Commission was in full accordance with the sentiments expressed by Lainé, and it passed the Legislative Body by 203 votes against 51. Could Napoleon have accepted the principles there laid down, and the counsels there given, and negotiated upon them, the Allies would no doubt have entered into serious considerations of an accord presented by an independent body in the State as well as by the Emperor. Instead of this he dissolved the Legislative Body, suppressed its report, and thus placing himself alone and personally in opposition to the powers of Europe, took up a position separate from the nation, and suggested to the Allies the subsequent declaration of their being at war with Napoleon, and not with France.

Who will say, however, that this stern refusal of even attempting to reign as a constitutional prince, or as the sovereign of a circumscribed territory, shorn of its preponderance as he of his renown, was other than a just appreciation of his own character, position, and past relations with Europe and with France? A purely selfish love of the maintenance of his own personal rank and position would have induced Napoleon to listen to the Duke of Vicenza and the other councillors, who recommended his making peace on any terms; but his mission and his ambition were not, he felt, merely to reign, nor yet to be the legislator of a free people. He made France a predominant and a conquering nation, had organized her to be such, and to accept the ills which it brought for the glory which it had achieved. Another France he would not know, and after having been Napoleon he could not again be Bonaparte. He remembered the constancy of Louis Quatorze under similar menaces and similar misfortunes.

Should he show himself less magnanimous, less constant than a Bourbon?

In truth Napoleon had made for himself a heroism and an ascendancy which were at variance with the age, with the independence of Europe, and the necessities of France. Fall from that height he must. All left to him was to fall nobly, courageously, and consistently; and that he did.

The following is the memorable address which he made to the members of the Legislative Body when they came to compliment him on New Year's Day, 1814.

"Deputies of the Legislative Body,—You might have done much good, and you have done a great deal of harm. Five-sixths of you are good men; the remainder are factious. I called you to aid me, and you have come to say and to do what aids the foreigner. Instead of union, you bring division. Your Commission has been influenced by men in the interests of England. Your reporter, M. Lainé, is a dangerous man; his report is drawn up with cunning, and with intentions which you do not suspect. The loss of two battles in Champagne would not have done me so much harm. You have mingled the bitterest irony with your reproaches. You say that adversity has given me salutary counsels. How can you reproach me with my misfortunes? I have supported them with honour, because I received from nature a strong and a proud character; without that pride I should not have raised myself to the first throne in the world. I had need of consolation, and I expected it from you. Instead of this you have covered me with dirt; but I am one of those whom you can kill, but not dishonour. Is it by such reproaches that you can revive the splendour of the throne? What is

the throne after all? Four pieces of wood covered with a scrap of velvet. All depends upon him who sits thereon. The throne is in the nation; it is I who represent it: you cannot attack me without attacking it. Four times have I been called by the nation, four times have I had the votes of five millions of citizens. I have a title; you have none. You are but the deputies of the departments of the empire. Is this a moment to bring me remonstrances, when two hundred thousand Cossacks are passing the frontier? Is this a moment to dispute about individual liberty, when political liberty and national independence are at stake? Your ideologists demand guarantees against Government. France would demand some against the enemy. You are not content with the constitution. You should have asked for one four months ago, or have awaited till after peace. You complain of abuses and vexations. I know them as well as you: they proceed from circumstances and the misfortunes of the times. Why drag these domestic quarrels forth in the presence of armed Europe? People ought to wash their dirty clothes in the secrecy of the family. You wish to imitate the Constituent Assembly, and recommence a revolution; but I will not imitate the Monarch of that day. I should prefer to abandon the throne, and to become one of the sovereign people, than to remain enslaved as a King."

Finding so little sympathy and support from the class of politicians, especially from those who came from the provinces, Napoleon resolved to make an appeal to the citizens of Paris, that capital which he had rendered splendid, if not prosperous. The National Guard was a revolutionary institution which he disliked, yet he now armed and summoned it. And ordering a solemn review

of this body of armed citizens in the large court of the Tuileries, he presented to them, in a touching discourse, the Empress and her son, declaring to them, that he entrusted to their care all that was most dear to him in the world. Whatever were the wavering or nascent sentiments of the citizens of Paris, such an appeal as this was answered with enthusiasm, and for the moment with sincere attachment.

The Bourbons on their part were not idle. Perceiving, with M. de Talleyrand, that Napoleon's desperation in Paris, and the advance of the Allies beyond the Rhine, "was the commencement of the end," the Count d'Artois left Edinburgh for Switzerland, the Duke d'Angoulême repaired to the head-quarters of Lord Wellington in the south. An active Royalist agent had already won over the Mayor and other notabilities of Bordeaux; M. de la Rochejacquelin was busied in La Vendée. But the fate of France was no longer in its own hands; and the sentiments of the Emperor of Russia and of his Allies were likely to be far more conclusive than any French manifestation of incipient Royalism. Of the three Allied Courts which entered France at the head of their respective armies, that of Prussia, as may well be supposed, was most inveterate against Napoleon. Blucher and his staff, as well as the mass of troops which followed him, dreamed not only of avenging in Paris the capture of Berlin, but of sweeping Napoleon and his family from the throne, nay, taking his life as forfeit. The sentiments of the Austrian court and officers were different: they sought to humble, not to destroy Napoleon. The Emperor of Russia, from character as well as position, held the middle opinion. His hatred of Napoleon was more political than personal.

It was the union and alliance between France and Austria which had forced Russia upon its armed defence. To break that alliance for ever, could alone fully accomplish the purpose of the war; and this required the dethronement of Napoleon and his family. But at the same time Alexander shrunk from re-establishing the Bourbons. He had at first thought of Moreau, as a King for France, and then had fixed his choice upon Bernadotte, which gave rise to serious differences between him and Lord Castlereagh, when the latter reached the Allied Armies. The English minister, however, strongly as he was bent upon confining France within its ancient limits, and fully as he felt that the restoration of the Bourbons could best effect that, and at the same time offer a fair guarantee of peace, hesitated to embrace their cause openly, and objected to the Duc d'Angoulême's person at the head-quarters of Wellington. What is most unusual in English politics then took place.* The Prince Regent made a personal overture to the Emperor Alexander, through Prince Lieven, full of very adroit and fulsome flattery, representing that monarch as the liberator of Europe, selected by Providence for the purpose. The Regent entreated the Emperor to pursue and to accomplish the great task by dethroning Bonaparte and his family, making no peace with them, issuing a declaration to the French people, separating its interests from that of the tyrant, and at the same time recalling to the French the existence of their legitimate dynasty. This proposal of the Prince Regent, and especially the mode and language in which it was conveyed, seemed to please Alexander, directed as it was against

* "The King always for the boldest measures."—*Moore's Diary*, Dec. 21, 1829.

Austria, and the yearnings which the Court of Vienna still felt towards Napoleon. And, no doubt, this had a great influence upon Alexander's conduct, and fixed his wavering mind in favour of a Bourbon restoration.*

It so happened that the Russian and the German armies entered France by that frontier and through that province, in which all recollection or regret of Royalism was most extinct. In the south and the west of France the old ideas of religion and of the throne were still preserved, and were not difficult to resuscitate; but the years and wars of the Revolution had nearly swept away such reminiscences from the plains of Champagne and Lorraine; and as long as Austria entertained hopes of Napoleon's submission, it would be dangerous and unfair to excite anti-Imperial manifestations. The Count d'Artois passed the frontier from Switzerland into France, on the 9th of February, accompanied by the Count d'Escars, Melchior de Polignac, and Count Trogof. Coldly received by the Austrians, through whose quarters he passed, Monsieur made his way to Nancy, where he hoped better from the Russian commanders; but even these stipulated that the Count d'Artois should wear neither title nor cockade, nor reside in a public edifice.

It was about the same time that the Emperor Alexander took up his quarters in the town of Troyes, with some of the inhabitants of which his French aide-de-camp communicated. The result was, that on the 11th of February,

* In Prince Lieven's despatch, containing the proposals of the Prince Regent, in the Castlereagh Correspondence. See also the letter of Baron Stein to Count Lieven, No. 60 of the Appendix to the "*Lieben von Stein*," by which it appears, that whilst Lord Castlereagh compelled the Allies to treat with Napoleon at Chatillon, the recommendations of the Prince Regent made Prussia and Russia neglect these negotiations, and turn against Napoleon.

eight citizens of Troyes, the Marquis de Vidranges and the Chevalier de Gouault amongst them, waited on Alexander, wearing the white cockade, and demanding the restoration of the Bourbons. This was the first time these words were mentioned in France. Alexander replied to them, that the chances of war were uncertain, and that he should be sorry to see those who addressed him sacrificed; nor were his fears untrue, for the Imperialists, having some days after retaken possession of Troyes, the Chevalier Gouault was arrested and shot.

The Royalist movement at Bordeaux was better managed, and was a more spontaneous and general movement of the population. The ports, especially those of the ocean, were the places in which not only the Imperial but the Revolutionary Government were most disliked. With the loss of the French colonies and trade, Bordeaux had lost its importance. Its commercial interests were ruined, its educated and professional classes, after having sent their quota to the revolutionary scaffold, had groaned in oppression ever since, and were ready to express their feelings, as Lainé, one of their most distinguished citizens, had done. The tax on drinks had weighed most upon this region, and one of the latest acts of Napoleon's distress was to augment these taxes. M. Taffard de St. Germain, a Royalist emissary, had been for some time at Bordeaux, when the approach of the English army, and the knowledge that the Duke of Angoulême was with or near it, gave force and feasibility to plans of restoration. The Mayor of Bordeaux, Count Lynchol, was also of Royalist principles. He had seen one of the Polignacs at Paris not long previous. In a meeting between him

and M. Taffard de St. Germain, on the 27th of February, he had agreed to proclaim Louis XVIII. at the first fitting opportunity. M. de Larochejacquelin asked the Duke of Wellington to furnish this opportunity, by advancing upon Bordeaux; but the Congress of Chatillon was still sitting, and the English General was sensitively alive to certain accusations, which Soult made against him, of seeking to create a civil war in France. He, therefore, kept the Duke of Angoulême removed from head-quarters, where, indeed, we have Mr. Larpent's testimony for knowing that he excited no profound admiration. On the 7th of March, however, the Commander allowed Beresford to march on to Bordeaux with 15,000 men. He was to arrive on the 12th. On the previous day the Mayor assembled the municipal body, summoned M. de Taffard before it. There it was agreed that the authorities should go in procession to meet the British General, before him assume the white cockade, and proclaim Louis XVIII. This was done on the 12th. The magistrates of Bordeaux proceeded to meet Beresford, who rather awkwardly and rudely professed not to understand them, and talked of taking possession of Bordeaux in the name of his master. He doubted, as did the Commander-in-chief, of the popularity of the Bourbons. They had, however, boons and arguments wherewith to win the Bordelais; for when the Duke of Angoulême, at his public entry, promised that there should be no more war, no more conscription, no more tax upon drinks, the people of Bordeaux flung up their caps without hesitation, and welcomed the Bourbon princes within their walls. Such events were more important for the influence they were likely to produce upon the Sovereigns then approaching Paris, than

from any force that actually existed for the Bourbons in the Gironde.

The historian of Napoleon has a splendid picture to paint in the doubts and alternations of fortune and of life which beset the Emperor, now crushed by numbers and broken in spirit, almost reduced to consent to reign over the France that Louis XIV. had left, now recovering hopes and pride in victory, and boasting that he was still nearer to Vienna than his enemies to Paris. But the alternations between confidence and despair were quite as great amongst the Allies; and as their horizon of possibilities and contingencies was wider than his, the greater was their incertitude. In such a state of suspense, and amongst so many wavering resolutions, it is wonderful what the energy and determination of one man may effect. Amongst the restless and ardent spirits who made a religion of their loyalty, and who scorned to serve in France other than their legitimist monarchs, was the Baron de Vitrolles. He had been an officer in the emigrant army of the Prince of Condé, and was residing in Piedmont, when it was announced that the Allied Armies had invaded France, and that the Bourbon princes were about to return thither. M. de Vitrolles lost no time in joining the Count d'Artois at Nancy. The Count, like all the princes and chiefs of the time, was in despair, and about to turn his back upon France and upon the Allied Sovereigns, from neither of whom was he able to win recognition or respect. The ardent spirit of Vitrolles breathed fresh confidence in the Prince; and having done so, Vitrolles set out for the head-quarters of the Allies. He was seized by the insurgent peasants, and was wellnigh brought a prisoner before Napoleon, but his hardihood and address enabled him to

escape. He succeeded in reaching Paris, and amongst other friends visited the Duc d'Alberg.

The Prince Primate of the Confederation of the Rhine, with his fortune and his dignity built up on German ground by the patronage of the French Emperor, was naturally affected by the tempest which threatened him with shipwreck. Another Imperial dignitary, Prince Talleyrand, was much in the same predicament; but was interested, as the Duc d'Alberg was not, in the setting aside of Napoleon. The Emperor, on the very eve of quitting Paris, alluded to the enemies whom he left behind in Paris, and who were amongst his own servitors. Talleyrand at the moment took no notice of the apostrophe, but quietly continued his conversation with King Joseph. He knew himself to be suspected and hated by Napoleon. Still it is too much to say that the Prince plotted the return of the Bourbons. In truth, neither he nor D'Alberg knew what to plot, for they were not even aware of the events of the day, so interrupted were the communications, so rigid the police. Some English journals, smuggled into France by the Abbé de Pradt, formed the only means of intelligence. But it was evident that the Emperor's power was tottering, and that it was of vital importance to the grand dignitaries to wield influence, preserve connexions, and render service at the moment of the great change which seemed impending. To Talleyrand's incessant demands for news, D'Alberg replied by proposing to send an agent to Chatillon, where the Congress was still supposed to be. Vitrolles was a fit person. What Vitrolles wanted was the means of introducing himself to the Allied minister, or to the Emperor Alexander. Talleyrand promised him a letter, but of course gave it not. The Duc

d'Alberg had been intimate at Vienna with Count Stadion; they were in the habit of meeting at the house of two ladies, who had received their homage, and whose names thus formed a link of friendship between them. Instead of a letter of introduction, the Duc d'Alberg wrote the two names, and gave them to Vitrolles, as a sure and a safe passport to Stadion. Vitrolles reached Chatillon on the 9th of March. Stadion told him that Chatillon was no longer the place where grave matters were decided; head-quarters was the place. Thither Vitrolles set off, and found Metternich and Nesselrode at Troyes. These politicians were as eager for news from Paris, and for a true account of the state of things there, as Talleyrand was to learn tidings from head-quarters. The accounts of Vitrolles were encouraging; and the Russian and Austrian ministers had need of such, for although more convinced than ever of the impossibility of treating with Napoleon, and of the necessity of getting rid of him, they knew not how it was to be done. Vitrolles, of course, recommended them to hoist the white flag, and proclaim the Bourbons. He promised zealous responses both from Paris and the provinces; but the Allied ministers shook their heads, for they saw no appearance of Royalist enthusiasm. Hereupon Vitrolles found his way to the Emperor Alexander, with whom he had a long interview on the 14th, and whom he succeeded by his energy and his information in persuading, that Paris, menaced or occupied by the Allied troops, would answer both in its senatorial and popular bodies by dethroning Napoleon, and that the citizens of the metropolis would welcome their legitimist princes as the pledges of peace and the term of disorder. Alexander inquired if there were any eminent men who would take the lead in

such a movement. M. de Vitrolles, whom the Emperor knew to be accredited by the Duc d'Alberg, mentioned that Prince's name, as well as the names of Prince Talleyrand, M. de Montesquieu, and the Baron Louis. The assurances of the Baron and Vitrolles had very great influence in encouraging the Emperor Alexander to embrace openly Blucher's opinion, and pass over the objections of the Austrian as well as of several of his own counsellors, towards that bold line of strategy and of policy, which consisted in marching upon Paris, and procuring there the means and the materials for dethroning the Bonapartes.*

Napoleon in vain exerted his military skill, and the hardihood of his generals, to avert this combined movement, which swept, like many converging torrents, on his capital. When the Allies were more apart, operating on a wider circumference of a circle, he could hasten with his little army from one to the other, give battle, repel an antagonist, and embarrass another who had then his flank uncovered. But as the Allied Armies approached the centre, that is, Paris, such manœuvres became impossible. The hostile masses were too close, and in extricating himself from the attacks and even from the rout of one, he was

* "The Emperor of Russia," writes Sir Charles Stuart, at the end of January, from Langres, "avowedly declares his purpose of proceeding at all risks to Paris. The immediate hangers-on, and those who re-echo the Emperor's words—Baron Stein, Pozzo di Borgo, and a few others—are loud in these sentiments; but there is a party, of which, I believe, Count Nesselrode, Count Barclay de Tolly, and Prince Volkonski may be reckoned, who are for considering more maturely our situation, and coming to one united object before a further advance is undertaken."

What were the opinions in the Austrian army, Lord Burghersh, who accompanied it, declares, in a letter, dated Troyes, March 12, and addressed to Lord Castlereagh:—

"We are afraid of fighting. This army will not be risked in a general action. Schwarzenberg would almost wish to be back again upon the Rhine. Peace is the constant cry of every officer in this army."

sure to stumble upon another, a larger and a fresher army. He resolved, therefore, to march from out the centre, and operate upon the rear of the Allies. Was he to do this by abandoning the capital? Did he expect Paris to hold out, and was it his intention to come to its rescue? Napoleon never decided this in his own mind, because he could not bring himself to contemplate such an extremity. When Count Mollien, before his departure in January, proposed to make provision for the event of communications being cutting off between the capital and the provinces, he replied, "If the enemy arrives within sight of Paris, it is all over with the empire."* Such were his parting words to one of the ministers upon whom he most relied.

When, therefore, Napoleon's idea of operating upon the rear of the enemy allowed them to bear down upon Paris with no more than 20,000 French soldiers between them and the capital, and when, in consequence, a council of regency was held to consider what was to be done, all those who possessed Napoleon's confidence, including his brother Joseph and Cambacères, recommended the flight of the Empress and of her son to Blois. The Emperor evidently had thought it better to trust to his Imperial father-in-law than to irritate the Allies, and depopularize himself in Paris by subjecting it to the necessity of a military defence. Talleyrand was one of those who insisted that Marie Louise should remain.

When he was overruled, he exclaimed, "Here is, then, the end. With good cards still the game is flung away. The Emperor is to be pitied, but no one will pity him, for

* The "*Memoires d'un Ministre*," by Count Mollien, so valuable, especially to financial history, were printed at the *Imprimerie Royale*, though not published by any bookseller.

having kept such people about him. It is incomprehensible in such a man. What a fate in history! To give his name to a series of adventures, when he might have given it to an age. When I think of all this I can but lament over it. And, now, what is to be done? It may not suit every one to allow himself to be swallowed up in this ruin. We shall see what will happen. The Emperor, instead of abusing me, ought to have formed a wiser judgment concerning those who calumniated me. He would have seen that such friends were far worse than enemies." In his will Prince Talleyrand defends himself against the accusation of having betrayed Napoleon. "I never," said he, "abandoned any power or government which had not previously abandoned itself."

Meantime the Allies advanced, driving Marmont and Mortier before them under the walls of Paris. Marie Louise and the King of Rome had taken the route to Blois. King Joseph, who represented the Emperor, went to watch the approach of the Allies from the heights of Montmartre. When he saw Blucher approaching that position, as well as the Russians moving on the heights of Belleville, he despatched a written order to Marmont, allowing him to treat with the enemy, if he could not maintain his ground. About nightfall, on the 30th, Marmont took advantage of the permission, and sent an aide-de-camp to propose an armistice. The Emperor Alexander, who was at the Château de Bondy, was eager to grant it. Both he and the King of Prussia showed their anxiety to declare that their hostility was not against either Paris or the French, but against Napoleon. An armistice was signed for four hours, and Marmont withdrew his troops into the city. There, at his own residence in the Rue

Paradis Poissonnière, the General was waited upon and addressed by the principal citizens of Paris, bankers, merchants, members of the Municipal Body. To anxious inquiries with regard to the probable fate of the city, the General replied that he had done all that a General could do—provided for the retreat of his troops, which he withdrew to march on Fontainebleau, where the Emperor's arrival was expected. But a capitulation was necessary to save Paris, and there was no functionary who could negotiate or obtain this save the General. A deputation of the Municipal Body entreated Marmont to conclude and sign this capitulation, in order to save the city. Considering the kind of troops, and the character of some of the Generals outside the walls, the Cossacks, and Blucher, such anxieties were natural and well founded. Marmont, therefore, proposed a capitulation, which was signed at two on the morning of the 31st. It stipulated the evacuation of the capital by the French army and Marshals, and recommended it to the generosity of the Allied Sovereigns.

On the following morning, the 31st March, took place the solemn entry of the Allied Sovereigns into Paris at the head of their troops. The crowd of spectators was immense—was even alarming; but no deep or unanimous sentiment animated that crowd. The long and iron reign of Napoleon had stifled everything like the expression of a popular sentiment, so that even those who saw in the entrance of the Cossacks the humiliation of their country, remained, from habitude, silent. Such of the citizens as had property and fortune, and families perilled by the prospect of the previous day, when the capital ran the risk of being taken by assault, applauded the military procession, which promised order, security, and peace; but Alex-

ander looked in vain for what he sought, that recollection of the Bourbons, or enthusiasm for them, which M. Vitrolles had led him to expect. Alexander had questioned the deputation of the Municipal Body, or rather M. De La Borde, a member of it, as to the disposition of the citizens with respect to a future government. The citizens of Paris, it was evident, had lost the habit of having any opinion at all. M. De La Borde spoke of Marie Louise as a possible Regent. Nesselrode mentioned the name of the Bourbons. M. De La Borde replied, truly enough, "That they were thought of merely in some saloons of the ancient nobility." Still some score or two more of Royalists did perambulate the city on horseback, but were received with astonishment rather than enthusiasm; so much so, that the Sovereigns, on seeing them approach, made signs to them to go away. Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld approached the Archduke Constantine, and tried to explain to him the expediency of overthrowing the statue of Napoleon from the column of the Place Vendôme. Constantine bluffly replied, that he would have nothing to do with it.

Of the Allied troops, whilst some accompanied the Sovereigns in their triumphal march along the Boulevards, others followed the road outside the wall, to form a junction with those who proceeded to the Champs Elysées from within. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia spent the day of the 31st either in conducting or reviewing their troops. It was not till towards evening that the Emperor repaired to the hotel of Prince Talleyrand, at the corner of the Rue St. Florentin. That personage, since the departure of the Baron de Vitrolles, had not seen his way more clearly. He was determined, however, not to quit Paris, as Napoleon's express orders enjoined him, in

the suite of Marie Louise. He besought respectively Savary, Pasquier, and Marmont to give him a dispensation from such order.

The two last refused; Savary not only refused, but threatened him. M. de Talleyrand was therefore obliged to recur to the manœuvre of pretending to start upon his journey, and of getting himself stopped at the barrier. He set out in a carriage with the Duc de Plaisance, but on some national guards demanding his passports and permit at the barrier, the Prince declared himself duly prevented from continuing his journey, and returned to his hotel. He had scarcely done this, when he learned from De La Borde that the Emperor Alexander and Nesselrode had both been inquiring most anxiously for him, and that the former purposed setting up the Imperial quarters at the Prince's hotel. It may be safely said, that at the moment M. de Talleyrand had no preference of a Bourbon restoration to a regency in the person of Marie Louise, which, in truth, would have suited both him and the Duc d'Alberg the best, and have been definitively more popular with the great body of the nation; it would have satisfied the Bonapartists and the revolution. It would have prevented the fatal return from Elba; it might have allied with constitutional monarchy, which the great and influential portion of the Royalists could not; and finally, it would have given France, in return for her limited territory and restricted frontier, the close and interested alliance of Austria. For this very reason, however, Alexander would not hear of the regency of Marie Louise. If Metternich and Schwarzenberg bowed to the Emperor in this, it was because they despaired of securing the throne to Napoleon's son, and the regency to the Empress, or feared that they could not

securely and effectually prevent Napoleon himself exercising, even from exile, a political influence over the government and over France, an influence as incompatible with Austrian regeneration as with Russian aggrandizement.

In the solemn council held that evening, however, Prince Talleyrand never himself brought forward the claim of Marie Louise. He allowed the Duc d'Alberg to do so, and, on perceiving the pain and repugnance it excited in the countenance of Alexander, he, too, as well as Metternich, abandoned the dynasty, as well as the person of Napoleon. In the little conciliabule of eight princes and ministers, it was not Talleyrand who made himself the champion of the Bourbons. It was from the first pronounced that there were but three courses to pursue,—make terms with Napoleon, and take guarantees from him; set him aside, and acknowledge his son, under the regency of his mother; or reject the Bonapartes altogether, to recognize the Bourbons. No one was prepared to recommend the first. When the Duc d'Alberg proposed the second, he was answered by Count Pozzo di Borgo, that countryman of Napoleon, who had risen as well as he to high position, and always in antagonism to Bonaparte. By birth a Corsican, by life and relations a Russian and an Englishman, Pozzo represented the necessity of finishing with the Bonapartes. Pozzo spoke but the sentiments of Alexander, and the moment that they evidently were so, all present professed the same opinion. Alexander then affected to seek out who should replace the Bonapartes, as if there could have been a doubt in his mind, or in that of any one else. Talleyrand played the easy part of showing, that, setting aside the Imperial dynasty, the ancient and the royal family

alone remained. Would the French accept the restoration? Talleyrand immediately called on his friends, the Baron Louis and the Abbé de Pradt, the latter of whom has left a circumstantial account of the interview. Both were loud in demanding a Bourbon restoration. "Who will undertake to accomplish it?" asked Alexander; "we are strangers." "The Senate," replied Talleyrand, who knew his veteran compeers, "will readily undertake it." The acquiescence of all present, even of the Austrian General and minister, in this determination was manifest. "If such a resolution, with the motives which produced it, were to remain a mere conversation," Talleyrand observed, "not a step would have been made." A *procès verbal*, or report of the decision of the great powers and personages, was requisite. This he instantly undertook to write; and, under his hand, it assumed the following shape:—

"The Allied Powers having occupied the capital of France, seek to respond to the wishes of the French nation, and declare,—

"That if the conditions of peace would have required the strongest guarantees in order to chain down the ambition of Bonaparte, they might be much more favourable to France, if that country itself, by returning under a wise government, gave the best assurances of tranquillity. The Sovereigns proclaim in consequence,—

"'That they will no more treat with Napoleon Bonaparte'"—

Here Talleyrand paused in his writing, and looked for the completion of the sentence to the Czar.

After a moment's hesitation, the latter dictated—"'nor with any member of his family.'"

The tacit consent of the Austrians present being given to the decision, the declaration continued:

"The Allied Sovereigns respect the integrity of ancient France, such as it existed under its legitimate kings. They may, indeed, do more, since they always profess the principle that, for the welfare of Europe, France ought to be great and strong.

"They will recognize and guarantee the Constitution that France shall give itself. They invite the Senate to appoint immediately a Provisional Government, to meet the necessities of administration, and to propose such a Constitution as may suit the French people."

Whilst Alexander was thus engaged in the condemnation of Napoleon and the dethronement of his family, and whilst Talleyrand, having drawn up the important declaration, carefully sent it to press, in order that it might appear in all the journals, and upon all the walls of Paris, on the morrow, Caulaincourt, despatched by Napoleon from Fontainebleau to Alexander, was awaiting that Sovereign at the Elysée. The Grand Duke Constantine had procured his admission, and introduced him to Alexander, after the declaration had been accomplished. The Emperor informed Caulaincourt that all was decided, that Napoleon was dethroned, and the Bourbons installed in his place. The Czar professed that it was not his doing, so much as the fate of circumstances, and the will of Providence. Caulaincourt pleaded for his master, and so powerfully, that Alexander is said to have relented and wavered, and to have detained Caulaincourt to pass the night on a couch in his apartment.

At the moment of the interview a deputation of Royalists, Chateaubriand amongst them, who makes no

mention of it in his Memoirs, demanded to speak to Alexander. They came accompanied by a tumultuous assembly, which had been held in the evening at the house of M. de Mortfontaine. Alexander would not see them, but Nesselrode assured them in his name, that Louis XVIII., with the support of the emperor, would ascend the throne of France. A more practical step of this assembly of Royalists was to seize hold of all the journals. The principal organ, the *Débats*, which had been taken by Napoleon from its proprietors the Bertins, to be edited by Etienne, was restored to them. Temporary editors were installed with authority from the Russian Commandant. Under such auspices the press of Paris announced on the 1st of April that the Bonaparte dynasty no longer occupied the throne, and that Louis XVIII. was King. Extracts from the timely and powerful pamphlet of Chateaubriand, entitled 'Bonaparte and the Bourbons,' accusing the former of every crime, and endowing the latter with every virtue, filled their columns in the place of more fresh intelligence. The press, once more free after so many years of servitude was read with avidity. And the bursting of the fetters which Napoleon had riveted, filled at least the inhabitants of Paris with something like joy at his fall.

Whilst pure Royalism could only speak through the press, M. de Talleyrand undertook to obtain the opinion and the vote of the functionary aristocracy against Napoleon. He summoned the Senate, and took pains during the night and morning to persuade each senator, of the prudence and necessity of taking part in his dethronement. Of 140 senators, not more than eighty were in Paris. Of these, sixty-five were got together,

not without difficulty, and not till long after the hour indicated for the sitting. Talleyrand, as Vice-President, spoke a very tame and insignificant address, merely stating that propositions were about to be made to them. These propositions were, first, the nomination of a Provisional Government, of which Talleyrand had drawn up the list. This was voted without a remark. The Provisional Government of France, according to this list, consisted of Talleyrand himself, the Duc d'Alberg, Count Jaucourt, General Beurnonville, and the Abbé Montesquieu. These three last were Royalists and supposed to be Constitutionalists. In accordance with the names the Senate voted its declaration, which was:—

"That the Senate and Legislative Body should make part of the new Constitution, with such modifications as the liberty of suffrage and opinion required.

"That the army and its officers should retain their grades and pensions. That the public debt should be respected, the sales of national property maintained: no member molested for his political opinions; the liberty of worship and conscience proclaimed, as well as that of the press, within due limits."

Not a word was uttered on this first day of the sitting of the Senate respecting the dynasties to be dethroned or enthroned. Fear, delicacy, and scruples kept that assembly as well as its advisers silent. Whilst the senators were thus timidly and shamefacedly accomplishing a revolution, a bolder man than Talleyrand, M. Bellart, addressed the municipalty of Paris. This body had been appointed by the Emperor out of the citizens, as the Senate had been out of the high notabilities and functionaries. On receiving the municipal deputation previous to his entrance

into Paris, Alexander, amidst promises to protect the capital and maintain the National Guard, said that a government, calculated to secure the peace of France and Europe was required; that it was for the citizens to give utterance to this wish; and that he, Alexander, was ready to second it.* Bellart now on the part of the municipalty of Paris drew up a proclamation, recapitulating the numerous wrongs committed by Napoleon on the property and interests of the civic class. This document signalized the conscription, taxation tripled since 1792, the sea closed, and trade annihilated, the treatment of the Pope, of the Spanish Royal family, the provocation to Europe, and finally armed Europe in possession of Paris, demanding a great guarantee of peace from its citizens. This guarantee lay in the renunciation of all allegiance to Napoleon by the municipalty representing the citizens of the capital. Talleyrand was alarmed and offended by an obscure citizen proposing and completing by a mere town-council what he should have done by the organ of the Senate. He tried to stop Bellart in vain. Bellart mustered one-half of the municipalty, got the proclamation voted and printed, leaving Talleyrand and the Senate to halt after him, and go through a repetition of his proceedings on the following day. Accordingly when the Senate met on the 2nd of April, the first word heard in it was a proposal for Napoleon's *déchéance*. Lambrechts moved this, and it was voted without opposition or debate. Another day was taken by the Senate to draw up and vote the reasons for the dethronement or degradation of the Emperor, which was an act of accusation against Napoleon, more circumstantial than that of the municipal body, but

* Mémoires d'Outre Tombe.

not so dignified. It accused Napoleon of having violated the laws of his own Imperial Constitution, by levying taxes, declaring war, fettering the press, refusing to treat with the enemy on rational terms, lavishing his resources, and even abandoning his army. No voice amongst the men who voted this, had ever been raised to remonstrate with Napoleon at the time of his committing these acts, to most of which he was compelled by the fortune of war, and by stern necessity. The system of despotism which enabled him to commit these or any other series of arbitrary acts, was sanctioned by this very Senate, which owed its existence, its emoluments, and dignities to this system and its founder. The puerile and captious recapitulation of faults on which these miserable senators founded their condemnation of him to whom they owed all, is perhaps the most signal monument of meanness ever left by a class which pretended to be the aristocracy of a great nation.

The Legislative Body more dignified, contented itself by simply adhering to the decree of forfeiture passed by the Senate.

There was another body and other chiefs, more important in that military empire than senators and deputies. This was the army, which, to the amount of 40,000, lay between Fontainebleau and Paris, with the facility of rallying other scattered divisions. To this army the Provisional Government hastened to address a proclamation, absolving it from its allegiance to Napoleon. More effectual means were used with the chiefs. Caulaincourt had returned to Fontainebleau with the intelligence that the Emperor Alexander would never treat with Napoleon. He also must have known the efforts of Talleyrand and the

Royalists; and that whatever were Napoleon's resolves, to fight or to abdicate, the succession of his son, and the regency of Marie Louise had become events of doubtful accomplishment. From Caulaincourt, Napoleon learnt all these circumstances in the night of the 2nd. On the following morning he announced to the Guard that he would march on Paris, and he besought them to maintain the tricolour flag, under which they had conquered. Shouts of enthusiasm responded from the soldiers, cold and gloomy looks of mistrust came from the Marshals. Wavering between the two, Napoleon on that day merely ordered the head-quarters to be moved nearer Paris, from Fontainebleau to Essonne. During the night the marshals and generals, questioning Caulaincourt, learned from him, that Alexander, in recommending abdication to Napoleon, left the regency of Marie Louise and the reign of Napoleon II. a possibility, if not more. Of all the treason of that treacherous period, this was certainly the most effective. It induced honourable but headstrong officers like Ney to attempt to bully the Emperor, and to find in his resistance a pretext for deserting him. The insinuation made to Caulaincourt in the saloon or antechamber of Alexander, all, even that monarch, must have known to be a treachery and a trap; for he had no intention of insisting on the claim of Marie Louise, and he not having that intention, no one had. The rumour was, however, allowed to circulate amongst the general officers of Fontainebleau, and to become accredited amongst them. So that when, on the morning of the 4th, Napoleon gave to his regiment the order to advance upon Paris, he was answered, not by obedience, but by united and rude remonstrances from Ney, Oudinot, and Lefebvre, who,

instead of obeying his injunction to march towards the capital, plainly demanded his abdication.

Marmont had, at the same time, gone much farther. In vain had the Emperor visited his quarters and showed him every confidence and friendship. Prince Schwarzenberg, on the 3rd, despatched to Marmont the decree of the Senate and of the other corps of the State, with the proclamation of the Provisional Government to the army. The deception practised through Caulaincourt upon Ney and Oudinot was not necessary with Marmont, who, after brief hesitation, replied on the night of the 3rd that he was ready to quit the Imperial quarters with his division n condition that it might retire freely to Normandy, and that life and liberty might be left to Napoleon with some circumscribed district of some country. He did not do this without consulting the generals under him, Souham and Bourdesoult.

Whilst this treason was in progress, Napoleon himself, overcome by the urgency of the lieutenants who surrounded him, consented to abdicate in favour of his son. He wrote that abdication, and gave it to Macdonald, Ney, and Caulaincourt to bring to Paris, and to offer it, on the condition of the regency and the recognition of Napoleon II. The three Marshals, bearers of that document, passed through Marmont's quarters. The Marshal saw the necessity of at least apparently suspending his own act of treachery, the Emperor having resigned and being in treaty for his family. Marmont, therefore, accompanied his brother Marshals to Paris, stopping on the road at Petit Bourg, the head quarters of Schwarzenberg, and making some arrangements with him, which Marmont declared were for the withdrawal of the agreement between

them. Marmont also declared, that he had left orders with his subordinate generals to make no movement in his absence. On that same night, however, the generals did march with their divisions, as had been arranged with Schwarzenberg, into the Russian lines, through which they were escorted, and the rear of their march was closed by the enemy's troops until they reached Versailles.

What could have been the motive of the generals? Was it fear of Napoleon, or of the punishment which awaited them, on the discovery of the agreement with the Austrian commander. This by some is said to have been the sole motive. Others think that it was a desire of Souham and Bourdesoult to commit, on their own account, a profitable treachery, instead of perpetrating it under the orders of Marmont. At all events the treason was committed.

The Marshals, in the mean time, reached Paris, and obtained admission to the Emperor Alexander, filling all those who had completed their defection with fear lest Alexander would again entertain and consent to the regency of Marie Louise and the continuation of the Empire. Macdonald depicted with the energy of an honest soldier the hopes and strength of the army, and the severe struggle that it might yet make, rather than see the family of the Emperor dethroned. At the same time he represented Napoleon as nobly resigned to a great sacrifice, and demanding nothing for himself. Alexander was embarrassed. He answered, that affairs had gone to great lengths with the Senate. Others represented the impossibility of now treating with any other family than the Bourbons, since the Senate and every important personage had acknowledged them. Alexander put an end to the

conversation by saying, that he should consult the King of Prussia, and would give his answer on the morrow. He sought thus to gain time. His Imperial Majesty knew well that something might be expected before the morrow, which would offer a conclusive answer to Macdonald's proposition. And come it did, for as the Marshals awaited the promised answer, tidings arrived that the corps of Marmont had deserted. Alexander instantly seized the pretext, declared that he was reluctant to resist the desires of the French army. The army, he represented, was not unanimous; an entire corps of it had deserted Napoleon. This rendered it impossible to be contented with a conditional abdication. It must, said he, be absolute and total.

The countenance of Macdonald instantly fell. He perused the despatch, saw its truth, and sadly withdrew. He refused to speak to Beurnonville, one of the Provisional Government. Dupont, appointed minister of war, who had been punished by Napoleon for the surrender of Baylen, was in Macdonald's way. The latter asked him, where he had learnt to avenge his personal wrongs at the expense of his own country. "I would give an arm," said Marmont, "to repair the fault of my generals." "Your head, Marshal," said Macdonald, "would not be too much."

One regrets to learn, that, contrasted with this noble conduct of Macdonald, Ney was in too great haste to follow Marmont's example, to allow him to return to Fontainebleau. He went at once to the Provisional Government, offering his adherence and his services.

It is painful to contemplate such a total want of either public principle or private gratitude, or even of decency in men so high placed, as was exhibited by the members of the Senate and the chiefs of the army. Even if the

latter saw the impossibility of further military resistance, still by holding firm around Napoleon, they could certainly have procured for him and themselves better and more honourable treatment. Nothing indeed could have been more easy than to secure the regency for Marie Louise and the succession for her son, had the military chiefs remained true to their Sovereign; but half treason is difficult, and persons who betray one master, naturally desire another as remote and as antagonistic as possible from him whom they have betrayed. For Marmont himself, instead of at least concerting his terms with his brother Marshals, to have entered into a mean and solitary stipulation requiring for Napoleon a roomy prison—for Ney and others, partly to bully, partly cajole him into abdication in favour of his son, whilst they well knew the baselessness of the hope, and then to desert him outright on finding Alexander's enmity implacable;—such conduct is so vile, that no degree of animal courage, and no amount of victories and combats can compensate for it. When one sees the old Scotch blood and gentlemanly traditions of a Macdonald keep the French Marshal of that name in the path of honour and disinterestedness, whilst the upstart and vulgar heroes of the revolution and the empire sink to the vilest adulation and the most unprincipled deceit, even the man who scorns the pretensions of birth, is reluctantly compelled to acknowledge, that there is something after all in the pride, the self-respect and the traditions of race; and that, despite of reasoning, vulgarity may be a crime and gentility a virtue.

After having written his profession of allegiance to the Bourbons, Ney came again to the Emperor to press for his unconditional abdication. Napoleon could not resign him-

self to the humiliation. He persisted in enumerating the forces which still remained true to him, and the generals whom he still might rally. He could get no officers to encourage him in such an idea, or to follow him on such a chance. Historians reproach Napoleon for putting all trust in his generals, and abandoning himself when they abandoned him, instead of flinging himself upon the soldiers, whose enthusiasm and zeal were unchecked. Napoleon, however, was the best judge of the necessities and materials of war. Without the old experienced generals, whom he had formed, he would not undertake to prolong the war. He deferred, however, the final act of abdication. In one of his nights of suspense or of despair, he no doubt made an attempt at suicide, by swallowing a potion which proved insufficient for the purpose. After recovering from its effects, and shrinking from a repetition of the attempt, he signed the final act, abdicating for himself and his family. The Island of Elba, suggested by Alexander, was secured to him in absolute sovereignty, with the title of Emperor. This treaty, which the English plenipotentiary approved, but refused to sign, was concluded on the 1st of April. On the 20th, Napoleon made his well-known adieu to his Guards, and departed for the place of his exile.

CHAPTER III.

RECALL OF THE BOURBONS—CLAIMS OF HEREDITARY ROYALTY AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS—THE COUNT D'ARTOIS SUMMONED TO PARIS BY PRINCE TALLEYRAND—HIS SHORT TRIUMPH AND UNPOPULARITY—ACT OF ABDICATION SIGNED BY NAPOLEON—ARRIVAL OF LOUIS XVIII. AT COMPIEGNE—EXPLICATION BETWEEN THE KING AND THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER—ROYAL DECLARATION ISSUED FROM ST. OUEN—THE KING'S ENTRY INTO PARIS—FORMATION OF A MINISTRY—NEW CHARTER—FALSE SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION—DEPARTURE OF THE ALLIED SOVEREIGNS FROM PARIS.

WHILST Imperialism expired at Fontainebleau with the military ascendancy on which it was based, another principle of rule, represented by another family of princes, mounted almost without dispute the steps of the French throne. Never did country stand so much in need of more than one royal or imperial race, and more than one set of governing principles. The only escape from the lasting pressure of foreign and conquering armies, and from spoliation, if not partition, lay in the adoption of another prince, with a new system of rule. The Bourbons and legitimacy were the sole ones that offered. They were forced upon the French as much by necessity as by the dictation of the allies. Yet it is difficult to imagine things or persons more repugnant to the French as a nation than the Bourbons of that time. The French worshipped

glory; the Bourbons brought humiliation. They had enjoyed ascendancy, if not empire, over Europe, and empire itself from the Zuyder Zee to the Gulf of Naples. The new dynasty cooped them up within the limits of the old monarchy, and robbed them of the conquests even of the first revolution. Equality, social equality even more than political, and a fierce denial of the claims of birth, was the cherished creed of every Frenchman. The Bourbons themselves, all their reminiscences, thoughts, acts, and tendencies, proceeded from a principle directly the reverse. The Bourbons considered France as their patrimony, and their ejection from it an act of robbery, as well as profanation. Such were the sentiments of even moderate royalists like Louis XVIII. As to the extravagant Royalists, who were by far the most numerous of the party, they placed faith in the legitimate king on the same line with belief in the true God, and thought a dereliction of the one a crime and a heresy as heinous as a denial of the other.

Great and natural were the fears that such a new and strange current of politicians, nobles, adventurers, and princes would never amalgamate with the broad ocean of opinions, wants, and habits, which an eventful quarter of a century had created in France. Alexander himself, as well as the English statesmen who favoured and accepted the restoration of the Bourbons, strongly entertained these fears. They hoped, however, that a reconciliation might be effected between royalism and the revolution, on the ground of a constitutional and representative system. Alexander was a complete convert to constitutionalism in politics. He recommended it for Germany, guaranteed it for France, meditated it for Poland. He had strongly urged

the Senate to lay down the basis of a constitutional government at the same time that they voted the degradation of Napoleon. A committee was in consequence formed, in which the most liberal members of the Senate, such as Lambrechts and Destutt de Tracy, were joined with the chiefs of the Provisional Government. Fearing that the princes, who were expected, would not much relish a constitution ready prepared for their acceptance, the Committee insisted on Count Nesselrode giving his presence and his sanction to their proceedings, to which strange proposition the Count in simplicity and good faith assented.

In the Committee the Abbé De Montesquiou represented the rights and supported the claims of royalty, as the Bourbons understood it, and his doing so led to such discussions and professions that Napoleon, on his return during the Hundred Days, finding in the Tuileries a Report of the Committee's proceedings drawn up by M. De Montesquiou, thought he could not inflict a greater blow upon the royalist cause than by publishing the Report in the *Moniteur*. From this we learn the Abbé's horror at the proposed declaration that "the French people freely called Louis to the throne. It was a monstrosity," he declared. "The crown belonged by right to the brother of Louis XVI."

"Do you make no account of the facts and events which have occurred since 1789?" asked M. De Tracy.

"What are facts," asked the Abbé, "in opposition to rights?"

When the senators, waiving the abstract question of rights, sought to proceed to the positive stipulations, that their own body should be preserved, and that its privileges

should be hereditary, they found M. De Montesquiou equally intractable. He insisted upon the King's sole and irrefragable right to make peers, pronouncing with great truth the pretensions of the senators to declare themselves permanent and hereditary to be arrogant and null. The dispute took place on the 3rd. Marmont's defection had not been accomplished. The Regency of Marie Louise was still mooted, and was still in the hands of Alexander to accept and sanction. This rendered the ultra-royalism of M. De Montesquiou somewhat more tractable; and a project was adopted by the Commission, in which the people represented by the Senate called Louis XVIII. to the throne, whilst they asserted their own hereditary rights. But whilst Montesquiou, in fear of Count Nesselrode, consented to this declaration, he wrote to Louis XVIII., advising him to pay no attention, but simply reject it, and in lieu thereof to issue, upon entering France, a royal edict declaratory of his intentions, and announcing the constitutional boons which it was the new King's pleasure to concede to his people.

The Count d'Artois was in the meantime summoned to Paris by Prince Talleyrand and the Abbé De Montesquiou. On the road he was presented with the Senate's projected constitution, which he coolly put in his pocket, and refused to acknowledge or to answer. He had already assumed the title of Lieutenant-General, which had been conferred on him by his brother on the death of Louis XVI. The Senate, however, and Talleyrand, declined to acknowledge this assumed title, or the authority which it implied, so long as the Prince denied their right to frame the basis of a constitution. The quarrel was serious. The Count d'Artois reached Livry, the seat of his friend M. de Damas,

on the 11th, preparatory to his entry into Paris the following morning. It was necessary for the Provisional Government and the other dignitaries to receive the brother of the new monarch. But in what capacity? The ingenuity of Talleyrand suggested that he should be welcomed as Monsieur, the title of old appertaining to the King's brother, but implying no authority of any kind. The welcome or address spoken by Talleyrand, as head of the Provisional Government, to Monsieur, perplexed the latter, who uttered a few unmeaning words in reply, and proceeded into Paris at the head of a somewhat motley cavalcade. He had with him about four hundred royalists, ornamented with white cockades; the Marshals that came to meet and accompany him with the tricolor, were not to his taste. When the Vicomte de Chateaubriand was presented to him, as a personage whose genius honoured as well as served the royal cause, the Prince could not avoid being courteous, but it was evident that he had never either read the '*Génie du Christianisme*,' or even heard of the name of its author. When he saw the tri-color cockade of the Marshals, he observed that he had come up from Nancy between hedges of white cockades. Bourrienne, who witnessed the procession, declared that it was closed by a squad of Cossacks. Could Alexander have thus appended such an escort to the Prince, in order to show him his true position? He had the good taste, however, to come habited in the uniform of the Cavalry of the National Guard. This corps, when they beheld the Prince, welcomed him with acclamations, which were caught up and echoed back by the people. So that Monsieur's entry had sufficiently the air of a triumph. What, however, rendered it more truly a triumph was, that on

the same day, the 12th of April, Napoleon signed the act of his unconditional abdication.

On the following morning the Count was visited at the Tuileries by the Emperor Alexander, who explained to him the danger of an open quarrel between his Royal Highness and the members of the Senate, who in all their acts had had his imperial sanction and advice. The Count bowed to so powerful an intercessor, and a compromise was arranged. The *Moniteur* made the Prince, upon his entry, thank the Provisional Government for all they had done, and declare that the Count d'Artois having come back to his country, there was nothing changed, save that one Frenchman more had been added to France.

The Senate, it was agreed, should appoint the Prince Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, and he was to accept from the Senate this dignity and the executive authority in the King's absence, which it implied. In his address on the occasion, the Count d'Artois declared that he was not provided with powers from his brother to accept the constitution, but he knew enough of the King's principles and sentiments to declare in his name that the bases laid down would be admitted by him.

After all, what lay most at heart for the Count d'Artois, was not so much the realities of power and the due maintaining of the Royal prerogative, as the forms and symbols with which it was to be surrounded, the expressions it was to use, which were to be employed towards it, and the etiquette with which it was to be approached. Unfortunately the nation, and even its most eminent politicians, knew as little of what was the real secret and the true essence of government as the new princes. In the constitutional system, which was contemplated, the most

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important body was the Chamber of Representatives—the most capital point to be decided, the manner in which it should be elected. Not a thought was spent on the subject. The doors of the Legislative Body were closed, and its existence, present or future, forgotten; whilst the Lieutenant-General, and the Provisional Government, the Senate, the army, and the public, were in an agony of suspense as to whether the tricolor cockade should be preserved, or the white cockade substituted. The cockade was of more importance to the Count d'Artois than the crown itself. His first step was to make the National Guard assume it, which they did with alacrity. First Marshal Jourdan, then Marmont, commanded the adoption of it by the troops in an *ordre de jour*. As the Count d'Artois spoke of nothing else, insisted on little else, it was necessary for every functionary and every officer to assume it. And the tricolor thus rejected by court and courtier, was cherished by both the soldiers and the citizens, who saw in it the symbol of victory, if not of republican freedom and independence.

The other acts of the Count d'Artois' brief hold of power brought upon him a far greater amount of odium and unpopularity. His chief administrative act was to despatch to each of the departments a royal commissary with dictatorial powers to enforce, it was said, the orders of the Provisional Government, but in truth to effect a complete revolution in the personal composition, as well as in the spirit of each civil departmental administration. The emigrant nobility, most ignorant of the country, and most fanatic to bring it back to what it had been half a century previous, were despatched on this errand; and wherever party strife and civil war did not rage, they sowed the

seeds of it thick. At that time, as Chateaubriand says in one of his pamphlets, one half of France, by its industry, fed the other half in its idleness; in other words, one half of the French were placemen, enjoying salaries from the state, as soldiers or civilians. To disturb and remove all these holders of place, and at the same time to alarm the greater part of the holders of property themselves was of itself to throw France into a revolution. Yet the allied princes, in their wisdom, imagined they had settled and pacified France in this manner, and they pressed the Lieutenant-General to allow the evacuation of the French territory. This they were ready to do, if the fortresses, which the French still retained in the countries they had conquered, were given up. French writers cast it up as a heinous crime to the Count d'Artois and Prince Talleyrand, that they gave up all the guns, provisions, and materials: they do not say how the French Government could have retained them. Any attempt to do so would have been a continuance of the war, and would have compelled the allied sovereigns to besiege some fifty of their own towns, in order to eject the French soldiers from them. That they were to do this, and leave the king and the population of France to enjoy political ease and financial impunity, is absurd to suppose. If the fortune of war compelled Napoleon's abdication, it surely rendered equally compulsory the surrender of the fortresses held by the French beyond their frontier.

Another crime of the Provisional Government was the opening of the ports, the admission of colonial produce, and of other commodities of which the prohibitive system of Napoleon had actually suspended the consumption. All these articles fell two-thirds of their price, to the

immense advantage of the million of distressed consumers. Instead of bestowing a thought upon them, French Imperialist writers prove their sympathies for a few beetroot growers and others, who had built up their speculations on the continuance of the Empire and its prohibitions, and who, like so many other servitors and officers of Napoleon, fell with the hand, the army, and the policy, which fed them.

Louis XVIII. had, in the mean time, set out from Hartwell to occupy the throne of his ancestors. His brother had despatched to him the Count de Bruges, Alexander Count Pozzo di Borgo, to communicate their sentiments and desires. However profound his retreat, Louis had still been deeply influenced by the political atmosphere and ideas of England, in which the necessity of practical freedom is admitted, covered over with the forms of unbounded respect for the throne. Louis believed the maintenance and the innocuousness of those liberties to have depended on the almost religious reverence for royalty. He thought it dangerous to introduce the one into France without the other; and however anxious to please Alexander, who then really represented the constitutional party in France, he was also determined to keep at the head of that party, which must be his principal force, the Royalists. Enthusiastically received in London, Louis replied to the Prince Regent in terms of grateful warmth, which were said deeply to have hurt the Emperor Alexander.*

* The cause of the unbounded gratitude evinced in this speech of Louis XVIII. to the Prince Regent remained long an enigma. It is, however, explained by the publication, in the Castlereagh Correspondence (3rd series, vol. i. p. 267), of a secret despatch from Count Lieven, which mentions that, on the 25th January, 1814, the Prince Regent sent for him, and personally urged the Emperor Alexander, through his ambassador, to have done with Napoleon and his race, refuse to treat with them, and recal the existence of

"It is to the councils of your Royal Highness," said Louis, "to this glorious country, and the constancy of its inhabitants, that I shall ever attribute, after Divine Providence, the re-establishment of our family on the throne of its ancestors, as well as that happy state of things which enables me to close wounds, calm passions, and restore peace, repose, and happiness to all nations."

Embarking at Dover, under the thunder of English cannon, Louis sailed to Calais, escorted by that same frigate, "Jason," which had brought back his brother, in fear and dishonour, from La Vendée. As he put foot upon the pier, his Majesty was welcomed by General Maison, the future Marshal,* and observed by Louvel, the future assassin of the Duc de Berri. Overwhelmed with felicitations, processions, addresses, the King sought a brief repose in the royal Chateau of Compiegne, sufficiently near to the capital to allow its chief authorities and dignitaries to come, pay their respects, and express their sentiments. On these Louis wished to meditate, before he made the important declaration expected of him, on his entrance into Paris.

Not so much from an illiberal feeling, as from a sense of personal dignity, the pretensions of the Senate, (which had paid the basest adulation and submission to Napoleon,) to stand forth now as the originators and champions of the

their legitimate dynasty to the French as the rightful sovereign, as well as the best intermedium of peace with armed Europe. The letter proves that it was the Prince Regent of England who took the initiative in the project of dethroning the Bonapartes and substituting the Bourbons. For a step so important, and, as it proved, so influential and decisive, Louis XVIII. could not but be grateful.

* It was Maison who as General first welcomed the return of the Bourbons to France in 1815 in the person of Louis XVIII. It was Maison who as Marshal escorted Charles X. to his embarkation at Cherbourg, in 1830, which was the final departure of the family.

national liberties, disgusted Louis XVIII; and this disgust was naturally rendered more intense by the care of the Senate to avoid any appeal to the public, or claim any support from it, whilst they trusted altogether to the powerful arm of Alexander.

The main part of the Senatorial demands was to make themselves, by the grace of the Russian Emperor, the founders of the French Constitution, they themselves being endowed with hereditary rights, as members of an Upper Chamber, in recompense. That Alexander should have abetted anything so monstrous was a proof of his short-sightedness.

The Marshals, in a body, as chiefs of the army, proceeded to Compiegne, to offer their adherence to his Majesty. The Legislative Body went also, and were greeted by Louis, as being the true representatives of the people. After this the accession of Louis was complete. Secure of the adherence of the representatives of the army and the people, the monarch might well defy the Senate, though guided by the sagacity of Talleyrand, and upheld by the power of Alexander.

The Royalists were not idle in appealing to that truest of all supports, popularity, on behalf of the new Monarch. Chateaubriand represented him, as "a prince known for his intelligence, inaccessible to prejudice, and a stranger to vengeance." The same great writer has left a portrait of the King as he saw him at Compiegne.

"The King reached Compiegne on the 29th of April. He was clad in a blue coat, with a small star and epaulettes, his legs enveloped in large gaiters of red velvet, bordered with gold thread. He walked with difficulty, yet in a manner touching and noble. There is nothing extraordi-

nary in his stature, yet his head is superb; his look that of a king and a man of genius. Sitting in his arm-chair, with his gaiters after the ancient fashion, his cane between his knees, you might imagine him Louis XIV. at sixty years of age."

Such was the Royal personage to whom the principal Marshals of Napoleon, the week after his abdication, hastened not merely to do homage, but to hail as a liberator. Berthier and Ney were foremost in the display of extravagant zeal. Berthier spoke of the white plumes of Henry IV., and declared, "that France, groaning under a quarter of a century's misfortune, awaited the present glorious day." Ney was so heroic in his interested enthusiasm, that the King forgot his infirmity, rose up, and when his limbs refused to bear him, and some of the officers of his household came forward to support him, he seized on the arms of the two Marshals, and declared that "it was upon *them* he would lean. Surround me, Marshals; you have always been good Frenchmen. I hope that France will not again have need of your swords; but should we be obliged to draw them once more, infirm as I am, I would march along with you!"

Whatever we may think of the incongruity between the personage and his warlike enthusiasm, it is universally admitted that the attitude and the words of Louis XVIII. had an inspiriting effect both upon the Marshals and the Court, and that the scene, if got up, was successful—if involuntary, was felicitous.

The enemy which Louis XVIII. had for the moment in view, was the Senate and its champion, Alexander, of whose peremptory interference the King had some reason to be jealous. Alexander himself arrived at Compiegne on

the 1st of May, and the important explication between the Monarchs took place. Alexander, in his character of liberal Monarch, rallied his Royal brother as to his ultra-royal scruples. "Would his 'right divine,'" asked Alexander "be understood by his people? Or could adding the formula of 'King by the grace of God' add to the real power of the Monarch?"

Louis XVIII., against this insinuation, replied, "that mock as one might the right hereditary, or the right divine, he was now King of France by no other right, and no other claim. Without it, what was he, Louis? An infirm old man, exiled, and condemned to beg for bread afar from his country; such he was but a few days back. The destitute old man was, however, in right, the King of France. And this right alone had induced the nation, enlightened as to its real interests, to recall him to the throne."

Alexander, however struck with the force of these arguments, still recommended the new monarch to take into account the events which had occurred, and the revolution which had been accomplished. Lamartine says, that Louis declared his determination to withdraw altogether, rather than submit to the demands of the Senate. The conversations of the interior are only known through royalist writers, who heard afterwards, through the King himself, or his servants, the nature of these conversations. As there was a great deal of reason in the arguments used on both sides, it ended by a compromise, Louis XVIII., remaining firm in everything which related to principle, or to forms, whilst he consented to cede, in a declaration or charter, to the French, the possession of every solid and popular liberty. Louis would style himself King of France and Navarre, not King of the French, and would date

his reign from the death of Louis XVII. He objected to receive a constitution from the Senate, but offered to grant one himself, containing all the bases agreed to by his brother. The sovereigns separated on this understanding, that the Senate and Prince Talleyrand were to come to an accord with the monarch on these terms; and they forthwith set about their task, whilst Louis, to facilitate the agreement, proceeded from Compiegne to take up his quarters at the Château de St. Ouen, situated upon the Seine, not far from the gates of Paris. Alexander was obliged to be contented with this, but he exhaled his spleen in complaints which were not always just. In a conversation with Lafayette, at Madame de Stäel's, about this time, Alexander called the Bourbon princes uncorrected and incorrigible. Of them, the Duke of Orleans, he said, alone had any liberal ideas. "Why did your Majesty recall them?" rejoined Lafayette. "I could not help it," said Alexander, "they came upon me from every side. I wanted to stop them till the nation had given itself a constitution; but they poured in like an inundation. I went to Compiegne, to ask the King to renounce his nineteen years of reign, and other such pretensions. The Legislative Body was there before me, accepting the monarch from all time, and without any conditions." Alexander, at the same time, complained of the servility of the press. But if Alexander really wished to allow the nation the opportunity of framing a constitution, why trust exclusively to a Senate of Napoleon's nomination, and to Prince Talleyrand? Why neglect the Legislative Body, and shut up its hall? Why not recur to elections? If the press was servile, what made it so?—the handing over the journals to royalists, under the control of M. Michaud,

and with the counter-order of a Russian commandant. Alexander, it is to be feared, was not more sincere in his conversation with Lafayette than in his negociation with Caulaincourt.

At St. Ouen, the Senate and Louis XVIII. were in no better accord than at Compiegne. That body, deeming Alexander to have won more upon the spirit of the King than was really the case, drew up a royal declaration, such as they proposed the monarch to issue. It commenced much in the form afterwards adopted, and then put forward as the principal cause of the monarch's granting the constitution, "the necessity of preserving the Senate, to whose enlightened influence we chiefly owe our return to our kingdom." It concluded by a promise to swear to this constitution so soon as it was concerted by the representative bodies, and accepted by the French people.

Whoever drew up the document at such a moment, and it was said to be Talleyrand, must have known that the King would not accept or adopt such expressions. The King observed, when Talleyrand read it to him, that in so accepting, he, the King, would be in fact standing, whilst Talleyrand, representing the Senate, would be seated. Adopting, therefore, the commencement and the greater part of the draft presented to him, the King made some additions of his own, and issued the following declaration from St Ouen, dated May 3rd:—

"Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre, to all, by these presents, salutation:

"Recalled, by the love of our people, to the throne of our fathers, enlightened by the misfortunes of the nation which we are destined to govern, our first thought is to invoke that mutual confidence so necessary to our repose

and happiness. After having attentively read the plan of the constitution proposed by the Senate, we have recognized that the bases are good, but that a great number of the articles bear so many marks of the precipitation in which they were drawn up, that they could not, in their actual form, become the fundamental laws of the State. Resolved to adopt a liberal constitution, wishing that it should be wisely combined, and not having it in our power to accept one which it is indispensable to rectify, we convoke for the tenth of next June, the Senate and Legislative Body, undertaking to lay before it a constitution which we shall draw up in concert with the Commission chosen from the two Assemblies, this constitution having for its basis the following guarantees:—

"Representative Government to be maintained, divided into two corps, being the Senate and the Chamber of the Deputies of the Departments. Taxes to be freely consented to; public and individual liberty insured; the freedom of the press respected, save the precautions necessary to public tranquillity; liberty of worship guaranteed; property to be inviolable and sacred; the sale of the national property irrevocable. Ministers responsible; may be impeached by one Chamber and judged by another; judges to be irremovable and independent; the public debt guaranteed; pensions, grades, and military honours to be preserved, whether belonging to the old or the new noblesse; the legion of honour, of which we shall fix the decoration, to be maintained; every Frenchman to be admissible to civil and military employment; no individual to be disquieted for his votes or opinions.

"Louis.

"St. Ouen, May 2nd, 1814."

This royal declaration, published in the *Moniteur*, and placarded over all the walls of Paris, gave very general satisfaction, not so much, perhaps, for the promises of liberty which it contained, as that it seemed to secure to each interest and personage the advantages which they possessed, whilst opening to others the recompense which was due.

"People," writes Count Mollien, "had not at that time begun to busy their heads with political theories; the thought of every one was for himself." To this kind of satisfaction, the people were unfortunately strangers; and their welcome of the King was not even so enthusiastic as that which greeted the Comte d'Artois. At first, the public mind was occupied with welcoming peace and the Bourbons. They were the prominent figures in the day's picture. But the minds which had small sympathy for Napoleon, sacrificing his soldiers and struggling through a third campaign vainly, without success in the field or wisdom in the council, now contemplated him in another light—dethroned, proscribed, betrayed, deserted, his throne occupied by a feeble old man, who came under the escort of the national foe. Whilst the tide of courtiers and placemen had set to lick the feet of the Bourbons, that of the popular favour and military lassitude ebbed from them back to commiseration and regret for the Emperor.

On the morning of the 3rd of May the King made his entrance into the capital. He came in an open calèche, drawn by eight horses from the imperial stables, the servants still wearing the imperial livery. The Duchess d'Angouleme was at his side, clad unavoidably in the English fashion of that day, which contrasted with that of the French, and considerably marred any show of sympathy.

That enthusiasm which had at first prompted some Royalist ladies to mount *en croupe* behind the high officers of the Allied Sovereigns, gave way before the unutterable shape of the duchess's bonnet. The Prince of Condé and the Duke of Bourbon, his son, were also in the carriage, they were clad in a full suit such as was worn in 1789, the *ailes de pigeon* not omitted. It was not the Condé's fault if a prince was wanting to represent the young and rising generation; but when people are drawn together to see a sight or a procession, they are not wont to make allowances. And the calèche-load of superannuated countenances and costumes did not impress the Parisians with any exuberant admiration for their new masters.

The procession first followed the streets which led to Nôtre Dame, the first wish of the King being to return thanks in his cathedral for his happy restoration. Care had been taken to avoid what had occurred on the Count d'Artois' entrance, the presence of any foreign soldiers. The Old Imperial Guard was therefore drawn up to line the streets between the Pont Neuf and the cathedral. Chateaubriand, who witnessed the scene, wrote a glowing account at the time of the enthusiasm of all beholders. In his Memoirs, written later, he confesses that "however true this might be with regard to the chiefs, I lied as far as concerned the soldiers. I have it present to my memory, as if I was beholding it still, the regiment of the Old Guard which lined the Quai des Orfèvres:—Human figures could express nothing so menacing or so terrible. These grenadiers covered with wounds, the conquerors of Europe, who had seen thousands of bullets pass over their heads, who smelt of fire and powder; these men, robbed of their old captain, were brought to grace the triumph of

an old King, invalid with years, not wars, whilst an army of Russians, Austrians, and Prussians surrounded and watched them. Some moving the skin of their forehead, made their large fur hats descend over their eyes to prevent them seeing what passed before them; others lowered the corners of their mouths in the contempt of their rage; others athwart their moustache displayed their teeth like those of tigers. They presented arms with a fire and a fury that made one tremble. Never were men put to such a trial, or suffered such an infliction. If one voice had called them to vengeance at that moment, they should have been exterminated to a man, or they would have eaten the earth. At the extremity of the line was a young hussar on horseback. He held his sabre drawn, and he made it dance continually in a convulsive movement of anger. He was pale. His eyes rolled in their orbits. He opened and shut his mouth from time to time in gnashing his teeth, and stifling cries, of which one could only hear the first sound. He perceived a Russian officer; the look which he cast upon him was indescribable. When the royal carriage passed he made his horse bound, and certainly he was tempted to precipitate himself upon the King." The procession returned from Notre Dame along the Quais to the Tuileries. In passing the *Conciergerie*, and observing the grated corridor of her mother's prison, the Duchess d'Angoulême was painfully affected. On entering the palace she was overcome by emotion, and obliged to be carried to the apartments prepared for her. Many days elapsed before the Princess could overcome the terrible reminiscences of the past by the joyful realities of the present.

The first act of the King was to compose his ministry, and with the exception of the inevitable Talleyrand every

choice that he made was a bad one. None of them were what might be expected from the sagacity of Louis XVIII., and tended sadly to corroborate the reproach of Alexander, that the Bourbons were incorrigible. Certainly there was no great field for choice. Representative government had as yet made known no talents. To have chosen imperialists would have discontented the royalists; whilst the choice of ardent royalists would have alarmed the nation. The appointment of Prince Talleyrand to be Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Abbé Montesquiou to be Home Minister, and the Baron Louis to the management of the Finances, were but rewards due to recent services. M. D'Ambray had been noticed for talent as Advocate-General to the Parliament of Paris, previous to 1790. He had lived in retirement ever since; but, on the strength of his old reputation, Louis XVIII. made him Chancellor. M. Ferrand was another genius of the last century whom the royal favour exhumed from oblivion. M. Beugnot, equally inept, was given the all-important department of the police to manage in the place of Fouché; and during the many months he sat in his chair of office, never succeeded in seizing or finding the threads which conducted and moved that subtle administration.

The most important, though apparently the most humble ministry in the service of a king, who from his infirmity passed his life either in his apartment or his carriage, was the chief of the household. This office, styled a ministry, was given to the Duc de Blacas, who had been the intimate friend and companion of Louis at Hartwell. As his office made M. de Blacas master of the door of the King's closet, he soon, instead of allowing the other ministers to go with their portfolios to the King,

sought to relieve them of that duty, and perform it himself. M. de Bourrienne, who was at the head of the Post-office, having resisted this pretension, was superseded in his post by M. Ferrand. And very soon his Majesty came to see and hear only through the medium of M. de Blacas, Talleyrand and Montesquiou having, however, at all times access to him.

The first pressure felt was the necessity of contenting the numerous throng of emigrants who returned to France, greedy for employ. They were fit for little else than military or naval appointments. But the regular army, diminished as it must necessarily be, afforded small scope. Indeed, the most difficult and delicate of tasks, bequeathed to the new government of France, was to deal with this decidedly hostile and discontented army; and of the many mismanaged things, this was most mismanaged. The war department had been given to General Dupont, disgraced by Napoleon for his surrender of Baylen. The general had been in consequence a warm partizan of the Bourbons. No man was more unpopular with the army, and he increased this unpopularity by the wholesale dismissal of able soldiers, and as wholesale appointments of generals and colonels, who had never seen a campaign except in the army of Condé, and who were a laughing stock to the soldiers. There were 60,000 French officers, who by the King's declaration were entitled to their grades and pay. As the army was to be reduced to 200,000 men, it may be conceived for how many the military profession was closed; and yet edicts were now issued, restoring all the old corps of the body guards, and *mousquetaires rouges*, regiments composed of the youth of noble and royalist families, every private of which was to have the rank and

pay of officers. To them was to be entrusted the guard of the King's person; to them would evidently accrue all fortune, favour, and advancement; whilst their braggart and often provoking loyalty was flung in the face of the old imperialist officers, as long as they stayed in the capital. Moreover as if it was determined that all should feel their humiliation, the regiments were successively called to Paris, to be paid their arrears, be purified and passed in review by the Princes. This brought the whole army successively to the capital, in contact with its dissipation and its disaffection. The troops were paid partly in bills, which as they were instantly ordered away, they were obliged to discount, and usurious harpies took the opportunity of mulcting the soldiers. In short, it was impossible to unite more various or effectual ways of disgusting the old soldier, and causing him to regret the generous master and able administrator whom they had lost. M. de Lamartine has drawn a splendid picture of the *gardes du corps*, drawn from the noble families of the kingdom. He begun life himself at this time as one of them, a circumstance that not a little tinctures his history; but he is compelled to admit that the formation of a little court army, large enough to excite envy, but not large enough for real support or defence, begat a general though tacit conspiracy, of all that was people and all that had been soldiers, against the Restoration.

Instead of attending to the important consideration of how the military population of France was to be contented and provided for, Alexander looked only to one panacéa for all ills—a Constitutional Charter. He made the signature of the treaty with France, and the consequent withdrawal of the sovereigns and their troops, con-

tingent on the promulgation of the Charter. Louis accordingly appointed a committee, consisting of three of his ministers, designated Royal Commissioners, certain members of the Senate, and certain of the deputies, Lainé being of the number. Before them was placed the draft of a Constitutional Charter, evidently conceived and drawn up by men, who had neither experience nor confidence in representative government, and who thought the only safe experiment of political machinery so dangerous, was to establish it merely in name.

The declaration of rights, however, contained a frank disavowal of those social and fiscal privileges, which had rendered the ancient noblesse odious so long, and victims at last. All Frenchmen were declared equal, whatever their title. They were to contribute without distinction to the public taxes, were equally admissible to office or employ. Property was inviolable, even that purchased during the Revolution.

To these were added clauses or articles, which sounded well, guaranteeing personal liberty, freedom of worship, the liberty of the press, exemption from the conscription, trial by jury, and in no case by exceptional tribunals or judges.

All these were solemnly set down and promised in the Charter, to the delight of Alexander; but the party which Alexander endowed with superior power in France, observed not one of these promises, and respected not one of these principles, showing of how little value is a declaration of rights without the constitutional means of defending and enforcing them.

The first of all guarantees of the kind is the existence of an Assembly of National Representatives chosen by the country, expressing its opinions, and armed with its moral

weight. If a land contains a large proportion of the poor and destitute amongst the population, who are at the same time ignorant, fanatical, and bent on sudden and splenetic change, the educated or the wealthy classes can at least be fairly represented, and the National Assembly endowed with all the power and authority of the wide class from which it is taken. Unfortunately the principle of representation in France, as well as the experience derived from it, led not to the employment of the true representative principle either in an enlarged, or in a limited degree, but to a negation and perversion of it altogether.

The custom of the French under the old system had been for the people at large of each canton to meet in their primary assemblies, and there choose delegates or electors, who subsequently assembled in the chief town of the province, and there chose the members of the *Tiers Etat* or commons. This was by no means a bad system for 1789, when the whole population of France were alert and full of zeal, when the people and the class above them of non-nobles had but the one great aim in view of reforming the Government, and restoring life to a country that was in a state of industrial collapse and political anarchy. Whilst general zeal abounded, particular theories had not yet been conceived or developed. To select the best-informed and best-intentioned men, true to the interests of the class they represented, was the principal object, and these were collected in the Constituent Assembly. The evils of indirect election, as the system is called, did not fail to manifest themselves at other periods. The first pernicious result is indifference in the people, who, feeling they have but to choose one man to choose another, deem such influence little worth exerting.

Then the assemblage of a limited number of electors in the capital of the province exposes them, either to be intimidated by the turbulent mob, or influential demagogues of the towns, in times of political effervescence, or to be exposed to the blandishments and menaces of the agents of the Government, in more quiet times. It was assemblies chosen by this system of indirect election, that pushed on the Revolution and precipitated the Throne. It was only when the work of destruction had been completed, that direct election was intrusted to the primary assemblies of the Republic, already proclaimed by the Constitution of June 1793. The first and only employment of direct election, during the Revolution, resulted in a Convention, in which vulgar incapacity, base envy, and malignant cruelty, however redeemed by a large portion of national spirit, left the country burdened and stained by an unexampled amount of folly and crime. But a number of causes contributed more largely to this than the circumstance of the election having been direct. The more experienced politicians of previous assemblies had incapacitated themselves for re-election by a stupid act of self-denial. The electors were thus compelled to choose new men. It was the moment when foreign and despotic power menaced the country with invasion, and choice fell naturally upon the energetic rather than the intelligent. Direct election, however, became identified in people's minds with the crimes of the Convention, and was not to be thought of when a Constitution under regal auspices was to be framed anew.

The Commission of the Constitution named by Louis XVIII. was as little prepared to trust to indirect election as to direct. They were under the con-

viction that the popular sentiment was opposed to the present dynasty and settlement, and that to hope for its concurrence was vain. The Consular Establishment of 1799 found itself much in the same predicament. After the overthrow of Robespierre and the Conventionalists, indirect election had been restored under the Directory. The result had been that royalism gained ground, and was undermining and outnumbering the republican, when military influence interfered to arrest both. The Consular Constitution was then invented by Sièyes and Bonaparte, having for its aim to establish a salaried class of dignitaries and functionaries, in lieu of the public, which they were to supersede altogether. The people were for once allowed a shadow of power, that of choosing lists of notables, municipal and electoral, out of which functionaries and deputies were to be chosen. But who was to choose? The great perplexity of the school of political mountebanks, who, like Sièyes, could not think of allowing to the people the right of electing even a deputy, was where to vest the right of election. The plain truth is, that between popular election or the political influence of many, and the personal despotism or the absolute rule of one, there is no medium, nothing at least fixed, to which a Constitution could be attached, or on which it could be built. Sièyes, however, fondly imagined that he could frame a despotism without a despot, and he proposed to create a Grand Elector, independent of the chief or the magistrate, charged with executive powers. Napoleon laughed down poor Sièyes, but adopted his ideas, so far as to vest the right of election in the Senate. The Senate consisted of eighty notables, functionaries or ex-functionaries of his own choosing. He chose them, and they

chose the deputies, out of a list of provincial notables. This *hocus pocus*, this wretched parody of a representative system, which substituted a set of Government salaried functionaries for the public, was looked upon by the majority of Louis XVIII.'s Commissioners as the only safe system to pursue. M. de Fontanes, who pretended to be weary of the Imperial despotism, was a loud panegyrist of its system of appointment and election; M. Lainé, however, resisted. He did not oppose indirect election; but the idea of a Senate or a Chamber of Peers electing a Chamber of Deputies, as some of the wise ones proposed, struck him as too preposterous. He wanted the power of final election of deputies to be at least vested in the richest notables of each department. To even this, however, the first framers of the Charter in their timidity demurred. The father of that Charter, Alexander, the Russian Emperor, was profoundly ignorant, as might be supposed, on the subject of electoral rights and electoral laws; and it was finally agreed to adjourn the question altogether. The King might make use of the Legislative Body for this year as a Lower Chamber, thus taking an assembly that was elected by Napoleon's Senate, as the Chamber of Deputies of the newly-emancipated nation!

The only article of the Charter on the subject of electoral right, limited them to those who paid three hundred francs (12*l.*) of direct taxes. The power of proposing or initiating laws was denied to either Chamber. This was reserved for the King, who, besides the several functions of the executive power, was "to make rules and issue ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws and the surety of the state." Such are the words of the celebrated fourteenth article of the Charter, by which

Charles X. and his advisers deemed themselves entitled to make a *coup d'Etat* and issue ordonnances changing the entire foundation of government. In granting the liberty of the press, exception was made to such laws as were necessary to prevent or repress its abuses. The word *prevent* was objected to as implying the censorship, and for that very reason defended by Montesquiou and his followers. The Commission, however, cancelled the word.

Whilst the Abbé de Montesquiou was charged with the care of the royal interests in drawing up the Charter, the Prince de Talleyrand was occupied in obtaining from Russia and the Allied Sovereigns all the concessions possible in the demarcation of the frontier. France had been promised something more than her old frontier of 1790. And the allies were prepared to fulfil their promise by allowing France to annex Savoy, and making the higher range of Alps its frontier on the south-east. To this was to be added the territory of Avignon, which, before the Revolution, had belonged to the Pope. On the northern frontier the allies were more inexorable. They were prepared to give merely some strip of territory, and to allow to Landau, a French fortress beyond the frontier, a connexion with the adjoining French department. The province between the Dutch territory, the sea and the Meuse, it was proposed to give to Holland, a plan devised by England for establishing a strong barrier, in the shape of an independent monarchy, on the northern frontier of France. The idea was to swell Holland to the size and importance of another Prussia, and make two great Protestant kingdoms, which, with Hanover, would stretch athwart the north of the Continent, united by religion, as well as by common

interests, and forming an inexpugnable barrier to French ambition. The idea was ingenious, and it was founded on sentiments prevalent in 1814, which were that constitutional liberties could, with impunity, ease, and advantage, be conferred and maintained by sovereigns, and would be accepted and enjoyed by the people, who in all cases could but make a large return in allegiance and attachment to whatever dynasty or rule might grant such a boon. It happened that all these territories bordering on France, and taken from the French Emperor to be engrafted with Prussia, were filled with a Roman Catholic population. To the jealousies proceeding from communities of one creed being governed by dynasties of another was joined that of nationality and race. Measures even of improvement and progress are apt to be the most obstructive in such cases, and to be construed as tyrannical. So that the very boon, the constitutional liberty, which England resolved upon, to amalgamate Flemings and Dutch, Rhenans and Prussians, failed with the former, as they would have failed if employed by the latter; and freedom, accompanied by religious difference, formed a greater cause of disunion (as, indeed, English statesmen might have learned at home), than a surety or a bond of empire. Prince Talleyrand employed his chief efforts against the union of Belgium and Holland, which he too made the mistake of considering a formidable barrier to France. He preferred seeing Belgium transferred once more to Austria, or erected into an independent kingdom.* The efforts of Talleyrand were, however, of no avail,

* A memoir on the state of Europe, drawn up by M. de la Besnadière, under the direction of Prince Talleyrand, is frequently referred to and quoted from by Bignon in his history.

Belgium was decidedly to be annexed to Holland, the Rhenish provinces to Prussia. Piedmont was to be indemnified for the loss of Chambery by the acquisition of Genoa. Switzerland was to be independent. The navigation of the Rhine free. England restored to France all the colonies she possessed in January 1792, with the exception of Tobago, Santa Lucia, and the Isle of France. Guadaloupe and French Guiana were restored by the powers that possessed them. France was to erect no fortifications, and to keep no more than a certain number of troops in Pondicherry. The right of fishing off Newfoundland was restored to the state of things in 1792. Other articles concerned the payment of debts incurred by France during its occupation of other European countries. Additional articles obliged France to abolish the slave-trade, as a condition of her recovering her West Indian colonies. The Ionian Islands were made over to England, and Malta left permanently in her possession. The French minister, moreover, agreed to acquiesce in the final distribution to be made of the countries beyond the Rhine, as the Plenipotentiaries of the great Powers assembled in Congress should determine.

After the Treaty, which bears the date of May 30th, the Allied Sovereigns withdrew their troops from Paris, and took their departure, the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia to England, the Emperor of Austria to his dominions. The Senate and the Legislative Body had been summoned to meet on the 10th of June. The Chamber of Peers was now summoned for the 14th, to hear the Charter read to them, in order that it might receive their sanction, the Legislative Body being at the same time summoned to attend. The Senators, however,

did not all receive their letter of convocation as peers. Fifty-four were excepted, some of them as regicides, being Cambacèrés, Chaptal, Fouché, Garat, and Gregoire. Sixty of the old Senators alone remained. This number was augmented to that of 182, by the adjunction chiefly of names from the ancient noblesse.

Ten of the marshals were created peers; Ney first, and deservedly so; for he had shown himself the most zealous to repair to Compiegne, even before Marmont, and to address the King in the name of the army. With Ney were named Berthier, Suchet, Massena, Oudinot, and Mortier. It seemed too glaring a reward of treason to appoint Marmont. His name was thus at first passed over in silence. Brune had also paid his court at Compiegne, but was set aside as implicated in the crimes of the revolution. The military exploits of Jourdan and Augereau in the republican period also excluded them, although both had issued proclamations to their soldiers of ultra-royalist extravagance. Soult, equally willing to be servile, came too fresh from spilling useless blood at Toulouse. Davoust was proscribed by the Allied Sovereigns owing to his severe and rapacious government of Hamburg.

This somewhat motley assembly met with the Legislative Body, styled, in the official language of the day, the Chamber of Deputies of the Departments, on the 4th of June, in the Palais Bourbon. The King, attended by all the Princes of his family, proceeded thither in solemn state, the Marquis de Dreux Brézé, the same master of the ceremonies whom Mirabeau apostrophizes for closing the door of the Assembly of the *Tiers Etat*, at Versailles, in 1789, now presiding over the first Constitutional Convocation of Louis XVIII.

The following was his Majesty's address to the Assembly:—

MESSIEURS,

COMING for the first time into this hall, surrounded by the great bodies of the State and the representatives of the nation, who give me the most touching proofs of their affection, I am proud to be the dispenser of benefits, which Divine Providence has vouchsafed to my people. I have concluded with Russia, Austria, England, and Prussia, a peace, in which are comprised the Allies, that is, all Christian princes. The war was universal: peace is equally so. The rank which France occupied amongst nations remains to her, and has been transferred to no other state. What other states have acquired in the way of security augments that of France, and consequently its true power. The conquests, which it has been unable to preserve, do not diminish its real force. The glory of the French arms has received no tarnish: the monuments of its valour subsist, and the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art now belong to us by rights more stable than those of victory. The paths of commerce, so long closed, are now free. The market of France will not be the only one open to the products of its industry and soil. Those which long use has rendered a necessity, and which are requisite to her arts, have been recovered with her colonial possessions. We shall no longer be compelled to do without them, or to obtain them at ruinous prices. Our manufactures will flourish again, our seaports resuscitate, and everything promises that long tranquillity abroad, and durable felicity at home, will be the happy fruits of peace. A sad recollection comes to trouble my joy. I once flattered myself, that I was born and

should remain the faithful subject of the best of kings, yet I occupy his place. But Louis XVI. lives in the immortal testament which he destined for the instruction of his august and unfortunate son. My eyes fixed on that immortal production, penetrated by the sentiments that dictated it, guided by the experience, and seconded by the counsels of many amongst you, I have drawn out the Constitutional Charter, which you are about to hear read, and which establishes the prosperity of the State upon a solid basis.

CHAPTER IV.

FATUITY OF THE ROYALISTS—INERTNESS OF THE KING—CHATEAUBRIAND—THE CENSORSHIP—DEBATE ON THE PRESS—REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—PROHIBITION TO WORK ON SUNDAY—EXTRAVAGANCE OF THE RELIGIOUS PARTY—SOULT IN THE WAR OFFICE.

THE promulgation of the Charter was the signal for political parties to raise their respective banners. Unfortunately, the division of sentiment was too wide to be confined within constitutional limits, for whilst some spurned the Charter as an act of Jacobinism, others repudiated the dynasty as a recantation of popular principles and a negation of national glory. One should have thought, that it required no extraordinary depth of wisdom or of prudence, for those princes and nobles who, restored to their country after a quarter of a century's exile, and, indeed, oblivion, under the protection of foreign armies, to perceive that, few in number, shorn of wealth, influence, or experience, a compromise and a reconciliation between them and the rest of the nation, could only be made by a large surrender of their antiquated pretensions, by a rejection of what was servile and base in imperialism, but at the same time by an adoption of all that had been great, glorious, and good, both under republican rule and in the military system

which followed. The great body of the Royalists who returned to France, and who were welcomed and joined by the remainder of the squires and abbés who survived the revolution, were, however, impressed with no such necessity, and prepared for no such concessions. Totally ignorant of men and of things, they had no idea that power to be held and exercised should be based upon some national or some moral support, efficient and palpable. Napoleon reigned by his army, his glory, his acknowledged ability to govern; the Republic by the principles which it at first proclaimed and realized, or by the terror which it inspired. What means of government could the Restoration command, so soon as foreign armies were withdrawn, if neither the army was to be conciliated by rewards and respect; the middle classes by the freedom and equality which they prized; the educated and professional ranks by liberty of speech, of the press, and the opening of every intellectual career; or the working men appealed to by any of the boons or promises which they prize? The fanatic ultra-Royalists saw none of these necessities. The general acquiescence in peace, even upon its hard conditions, accompanied by the free acclamations which welcomed the Princes in the hopes that they would meet the wishes of the nation, was mistaken for a general return of the country to that religion of loyalty which prevailed in olden times, which made the monarch an idol, and his subjects blind worshippers, demanding neither virtue, capacity, grandeur, nor humanity, in the personage they obeyed. The belief that they were born idols, and had a hereditary right to be worshipped and to be loved, independent of their conduct or their beneficence, was the creed in which the infatuated Count d'Artois, his sons,

and the unfortunate Duchess of Angoulême, enwrapped themselves. These personages, now influential, had passed their lives in retirement, in ignorance, and inaction. Puerile as was their credulity, fanatic and wrong as were their opinions and their views, still an attempt might have been made to strengthen and support even these. Instead of this they did nothing, save mar the King's feeble attempts at reconciliation, by mocking and alienating every man who had grown great under the revolution and the empire, and by insisting that the present generation should be set aside.

Louis XVIII., less fanatic, less insane, was still more feeble and more deceived by the outward demonstrations of attachment and adherence which poured in upon him. He had lived and relied on the self-contemplation of his own majesty, of which he seemed to think the great essential was the form and ceremony with which it was enthroned and surrounded. Louis pursued no profound political studies in his retirement, saw nobody but courtiers, and allowed his intelligence to lie, as it were, fallow. The grand objects, the great views, which might naturally open to a monarch recovering possession of power, seem not to have struck him. When the Allies pared away his kingdom, confiscated his fortresses, and excluded him from the great council which was to repartition the territories of Europe, such things seemed not to affect him. But to be told that he was not king of France since the death of the young dauphin, to have a constitution imposed upon him, instead of his giving one, in other words, for him to stand whilst the Prince Talleyrand was sitting, this shocked and alarmed him. The restoration of the *Gardes du Corps*, and the inauguration and the establishment of the old mili-

tary household, was all that appeared to him as essential to do in the war department; and having achieved these absurdities, Louis left the Imperial Guards to exist neglected along with the pert young gentlemen who displaced and who mocked them.

As to affairs, or the necessities of administration, foreign or domestic, Louis knew nothing, and had such insufficient ideas of their importance, that he abandoned them to the hands of the most incapable, inexperienced, and infatuated men, whose sole quality was that of being worshippers of royalty and its rights. Nevertheless, the King during his residence in England had acquired a vague idea of the necessity of gratifying his subjects with the name of a Constitution, and the semblance of a representative government. He had no intention of bestowing the reality of freedom, or of winning the support of the public, or of any class of it, by admitting them to a participation in political influence. The Abbé de Montesquiou, who had the chief hand in drawing up the Charter, declared afterwards with great truth, that he had no intention of conferring real constitutional liberty upon the country. M. D'Ambray, M. Ferrand, and M. Beugnot, were partizans of what they called the Ancient Constitution by Parliament and Ordonnances. Prince Talleyrand neither knew nor cared what a Constitution meant. Louis, however, was not naturally a man of extremes. He was so far fitted for the part of a constitutional monarch, that he liked to steer a middle course between contending influences, and seek to preserve his own independence. In order to do this with fairness, prudence, and success, it were necessary to enable both sides to display their arguments, their aims, their force. By allowing a liberal, constitutional, and middle-class party

free development at that time, the King might have kept the balance between it and the ultra-Royalists; but he would not trust the nation so far. He would not consult the country in elections, or allow a free representative assembly to meet, nor would he permit the press its free expression. The consequence was, that Louis saw but one party before him, that of the Royalists, which he allowed to rise up without counterpoise, and almost without contradiction: thus purposely depriving himself of all knowledge of public opinion, dispensing with a genuine representative body, and silencing the mock Assembly, which he preserved, by denying it the right of originating propositions or laws, Louis at the same time excluded every independent voice from his cabinet; nay, he considered a council of ministers as too free of expression for his royal ear; and he therefore committed himself altogether to M. De Blacas, who acted as the intermediary between his Majesty and his other ministers, and who, keeping the door of the royal closet, admitted no one to converse with the King, save by his permission. Such infatuation would scarcely be believed of the Court of the Great Mogul, yet such was the conduct of a monarch restored after a quarter of a century's absence to the throne of a country, the most susceptible, the most civilized, the most agitated with conflicting interests and sentiments of any in the world.

It is difficult to say, whether those who, like the Count d'Artois, were anti-constitutional and ultra-Royalist from fanatic and religious feeling, or those who denounced the constitution as impolitic, like the Count de Villele, were most pernicious in their influence upon opinion and upon the State. The ultra-Royalists, from policy, condemned the Constitution, from a conviction that the great body of the

French nation would never bear to be dominated by that narrow portion of the noblesse and gentry, possessed of hereditary fortune, who had, for the most part, emigrated, and who deemed it irrefragably right and expedient that their caste should govern. No free representative system could lead to such a result. And the only chance of ever reaching it was to keep the country in leading-strings, maintain its opinions and its education stifled and repressed, allow nothing but monarchic and monastic philosophy to be taught, until France was put back, like an erring time-piece, half a century, and brought, by a despotism exercised in the name of legitimacy, to the same state of obedience, poverty, ignorance, and nullity, which prevailed in 1750.

None but the idiot or the maniac, it will be said, could entertain such ideas as these. But in this sense did men of great intellectual power like De Maistre and Bonald write; and even so practical a man as Villele thought fit to raise his voice from Toulouse against the inexpediency and folly of a Charter. On the opposite extreme an antagonistic banner of course was raised, which had need of announcing no other principles than those of truly representative government; for with freedom of the press, independence and a fair extension of election, parliament endowed with its proper right of originating laws and controlling expenses, they were certain of exercising vast power. They had not only the classes to appeal to who felt hurt and aggrieved by the narrow and exclusive spirit of restored Royalism, but they had the old military and imperialist as well as the republican and revolutionary parties to rely on.

There were a few men who from the first took a true

view of what the government of Restoration might do, in order to content its more rational followers, and at the same time win the adherence of the nation. Such a man was Lainé. Such a man, in the first years of the Restoration, was Chateaubriand. This powerful writer had as much of the fire and enthusiasm of legitimacy as the oldest officer of the army of Condé. He worshipped royalty, as he did religion, with the faith of a believer, and the imagination of a poet. He had served Napoleon, and even flattered him, was not blind to his military genius, and his heart had refused to remain cold to the glories of his country. But he felt assured, at least then, that legitimate Royalism could ally with liberty and with the progress of the age, of which he considered imperial despotism, even in the midst of all its victories, the fetterer and the gaoler. Carried away by hatred and by zeal he had written a pamphlet on the fall of Bonaparte, as unjust to that great man, as unworthy of the great writer; and he had received in return that usual minimum of gratitude which men who reach power by aid of the penman bestow upon their instruments. But Chateaubriand persevered not the less zealously in his mission, which was to persuade Royalism to adopt those constitutional principles which could reconcile it to and identify it with the nation, whilst in the same breath he besought the Liberals to observe that moderation which is compatible with kingly government, and at the same time learn to feel that loyalty and enthusiasm for monarchy as an institution, wanting which it is so often compelled to trust to violence and military support.

All the arguments urged against the Charter and the King from one side or the other will be found stated

in the '*Réflexions Politiques*' of Chateaubriand, and announced by him with a copious good sense, a conclusive logic, and a sincerity of conviction, which must have made deep and salutary impression. After describing the ancient régime, and colouring it with all the brilliancy that its partizans could desire, the writer exclaims:—

"But all this noble edifice has crumbled. Nor is there any use in inquiring whether it was the most solid or most perfect of governments; whether founded on religion and antiquity, in concurrence with our habits, character, and soil, it was not more in harmony with the genius of the nation than that which prevails to-day. Man can in life only start from the point at which he has arrived. Whether the government of the Louis' was good or bad, it has gone. We are no longer in the same place we were an hundred or three hundred years ago; and we must take things as they are, not as they happen to have been. How come back to the old state of things? How require proofs of noblesse of young men seeking to become officers in the army? Restore Louis XVI., with 1700 millions of debts, and ask a finance minister how he is to meet these without the means of consulting the public or its representatives? How could he manage the Parliament, the noblesse, and the clergy?"

The writer thus demonstrates to the hostile Royalist that the Charter truly gave him every advantage he ought reasonably to require; and turning to the liberal opposition he equally shows to them every guarantee of freedom bestowed in the concession of the Charter. Here, however, unfortunately, his arguments stopped short and failed, for whatever was promised in the Charter, nothing was fulfilled. It became soon apparent how these pro-

mises were to be realized, when the minister came down to the Chamber of Deputies on the 5th of July with the law for regulating the press. This law demanded that no journal or periodical should appear without the royal authorization, that no printer should exercise his calling without a *brevet* or patent, for which he was required to pay security, and which he was liable to forfeit on contravening the rules imposed upon him. Lastly, no work containing less than thirty sheets of impression, which makes a goodly volume, and implies a high price, could appear without being submitted to Government censors, and approved by them. Such a law, which made a complete mockery of the promised freedom, raised at once a spirit of opposition even in the imperial Legislative Body, converted as it was into a Royalist Chamber of Deputies. The Committee appointed to report upon it unanimously declared the censorship to be unjust, dangerous, and unconstitutional. M. Raynouard, who was of the Commission, and seemed to have had the chief hand in drawing up the Report, pointed out that the only guarantee for the public liberties in the absence of the Chamber, was the Press, and that to place it at the mercy of the Government, was in truth to abrogate constitutional government: there was no longer a guarantee for even the publicity of debate, the entire faculty of printing being in the hands of the Government. The Report of M. Raynouard breathed the spirit of rational liberty, such as it was understood by every educated man. In contrast with it appeared the views and sentiments of the Government, far more narrow, more despotic, more retrograde, and more illiberal than ever were proffered by the worst ministers of the Empire, however violently they

may have acted. It was plain to see at a glance, that the cause of the Bourbons was lost, and that the great floating mass of the people, who disliked the Empire and the Republic, and who in reality demanded but the possibility of rallying to a constitutional king, must turn at once and for ever against a dynasty and a Government, which, after conceding a Charter, belied it, and practised the meanest chicanery to nullify what had been conceded, and escape from what had been promised

The debates in the Chamber of Representatives on the law respecting the Press came on one month after its presentation, and a few days after the reading of the Report. It was the first parliamentary debate to which the attention of the French public was called and its interest excited; and this interest was raised to the highest pitch by the totally different principles avowed by the Government, and those moderately put forward by M. Raynouard. Such was the crowd in the Chamber on the morning of the debate, that it could not take place. The very hall was full of people, and the President preferred adjourning the debate to forcibly expelling the crowd. The discussion lasted several days; it was little marked by eloquence. The minister and the reporter of the Commission were the chief orators. The principal objections of the latter were directed against the censorship. He seemed to admit the subjection of all printers to Government by means of the system of *brevets*. Members of opposition preferred a *cautionnement* or deposit for journals, with the indispensable signature of a patent proprietor. A jury or the judges was proposed in lieu of the censorship. M. de Montesquiou was inexorable. He would merely concede that the censorship should apply to

works of twenty sheets, in lieu of thirty, and that the law should have but a temporary duration, and last until merely the opening of the session of 1816. The concession was sufficient to procure the passing of the law in a Chamber of 317 votes by 237 against 80. One regrets to say that M. Royer-Collard, afterwards so able a champion of the freedom of the press, as of other constitutional rights, was, with M. Guizot, the principal concoctor of this law of censorship. M. Guizot was, however, then a very young man, just commencing his political career as Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior.

In the Chamber of Peers the objections to the law were stated with more eloquence, and with even greater fervour, than in the Deputies; and it was carried there by a much smaller majority, which raised the popularity of the Peers, as contrasted with the servility of the Lower Chamber.

In the year 1812 Napoleon had caused to be drawn up by the Minister of the Interior, Count Montalivet, a report or statement of the wealth, produce, trade, and progress of the empire. As Genoa and Hamburg were then included within the French dominion, it was not difficult to present a glowing picture of its prosperity and resources. One of the first cares of the Abbé de Montesquiou was to cause another *exposé* to be drawn up, contradicting the brilliant report of the Imperial Minister, and representing France as bankrupt in resources and wealth as his predecessor had depicted it to be prosperous. Whilst the Imperialist had represented manufactories to be thriving, the Royalist showed that when Spain, the only outlet for French manufactures to the new world, was closed by the war in the Peninsula, the last remnant of French industry died away, the looms of Lyons, for example, being reduced to half

their previous number, so completely did Napoleon's struggle to shut English trade from the Continent have the effect of excluding that of France from its best markets. The actual losses in the wars of the later years were a more fearful and more undeniable enumeration. Ten millions sterling of mere equipment were destroyed. It was in his financial statement that the Abbé de Montesquiou was most unjust. Aided by some faithless clerks of the Financial Department, ashamed of their task, though profiting by it, the Royalist Minister brought in a bill of arrears, or of deficit, against the Imperial Government of nearly seventy millions sterling. M. Mollien has fully proved the flagrancy of such a statement, and the impossibility of such a deficit existing.* The figures were coolly assumed by the French Minister as correct, and they made the chief part of the difficulties of the budget.

The expenditure of the Imperial Government, previous to the Russian war, had been at the rate of thirty-five millions sterling. Much heavier burdens weighed upon the countries occupied by war, and made up for the sixteen millions of war expenses paid out of the treasury. When the maintenance of fortresses alone figured for upwards of five millions sterling annually, the immensity of Napoleon's expenditure may be imagined. He even devoted five millions to his navy, building vessels, and training sailors and marines for that struggle by sea which he contemplated engaging in, so soon as that by land had been terminated by the subjugation of the Continent. In 1812 and 1813 the regular budget rose to nearly fifty millions. Direct or property taxation, with the Crown domains, furnished one-half this sum. The regular customs produced not more

* His *Mémoires d'un Ministre*, printed at the *Imprimerie Royale*.

than three millions; the excise on drinks, with salt and tobacco, brought in nearly ten millions, severely felt and grudged by the population. The augmentation of these duties, as well as the seizure and sale of the common land and forests belonging to parishes, betrayed the embarrassments of the Emperor, and rendered him most unpopular in the rural districts. Of supporting his Government by credit he had neither the possibility nor the idea. An arrear of a year in the payment of the debt, although the current interest at five per cent scarcely amounted to more than three and a half millions sterling, showed how little this resource was to be relied upon.

Although the Bourbons had been welcomed in Bordeaux and in Paris very much on account of their promises to abolish the excise duties on drinks, it was impossible for the moment to sacrifice the revenue to popularity. A budget, much after the Imperial standard, was proposed for 1815, amounting to 618 millions of francs, not twenty-five millions sterling. The army figured in this but for eight millions sterling, and the navy but for two. Four millions was allotted to the interest of the debt, swelled by the arrears. The arrear itself was met by Government bills, payable in three years, and bearing an interest of eight per cent. The five per cent *rentes*, being but sixty-three for each hundred in the market, allowed of no lower interest or no better terms. It was necessary to give this paper, or these *obligations*, as they were called, better security of payment than a new government and a slender budget; Baron Louis, therefore, proposed the sale of three hundred thousand *hectares* of forest belonging to the State.

The proposition to dispose of the forest lands in the possession of the State prematurely stirred two questions,

which rankled in the hearts of the Royalists, although they had not ventured of themselves to agitate them. The property of the Church, as well as that of the emigrant proprietors of the soil, at the commencement of the Revolution, had consisted in no small degree of forests. The arable land of Church and noblesse had been eagerly bought up; much of the forest land remained unsold. It seemed but natural and just to restore them to the old proprietors. Louis XVIII., by giving to the Duke of Orleans and the Prince of Condé such of the palaces and forests as had escaped sale by being united to the domains of the Crown, fortified the claim of the emigrants. The law that was introduced into the Chamber for the restoration of this property might have passed without discussion but for the phraseology of the Minister, M. Ferrand, who thought fit to accuse the nation of disgraceful conduct. "Those Frenchmen who had exiled themselves, and those who staid at home," said the Minister, "were now, indeed, of the same opinion, arrived at by the one in never swerving from the straight line, by the other in having gone through more or less revolutionary phases. The present law," said M. Ferrand, "merely recognises a right of property which always subsisted, but in restoring which the King wishes to observe a prudent caution."

Such a line of argument, assuming that the emigrants retained all their original right to the confiscated property, and that prudence alone influenced the King in withholding it, aroused again that opposition within and without the Chamber, which it was madness to provoke in words, whilst not daring to realise those words in acts. In vain did the more prudent friends of the Crown point to the article of the Charter, declaring the revolutionary sales of land to be

final and irrevocable. So many other promises of the Charter being eluded, how expect that this should be respected? Such were the fears and feelings of the public, such almost the language of the reporter of the Commission. The imprudent words of the Minister, with the threats of the Royalist party, led the great body of the nation to consider them as enemies, and prevented the recognition of even just claims with feelings of even justice. On the vital question, the voice of Macdonald was again heard, reconciling the dignity of the nation and the interest of the Revolution with due humanity and consideration for the exile.

"The old defenders of the Monarchy reappear amongst us," said the Marshal-Duke, "protected by old age and misfortune. What changes do they find in all things—changes achieved in their ruin? Had we not better reconcile them to that change, and make them one of us, instead of allowing them to remain with their old claims, stirring up old enmities? It must be disastrous to the public tranquillity to leave those despoiled in the presence of those enriched, without endeavouring to fill up the abyss between them: the present law does not do this. Far from casting a veil over deep dissensions, the debates of the Deputies tore it away, and awakened fears and discord; yet what the law does is just and wise. But there remains an act of justice to complete it." And the Marshal pointed out, that, whilst it was impossible to deprive the individuals of the property which they had paid for, the nation was still rich and just enough to indemnify from the general mass those whom circumstances, not crime, had deprived of that property. The public passions were too much inflamed, and indeed the treasury too poor, for any such act of reconci-

liation at the moment. The cares and capabilities, indeed, of those first moments of restored royalty went no farther than to open every national wound, as if the task was to irritate and avenge, not regulate and pacify.

Whilst the attitude of the Court, the acts of its Ministers, and the language habitually employed by both, betraying principles and tendencies far more retrograde than even the present acts, disquieted and alarmed the nation, a crowd of circumstances, less important in magnitude, but more calculated to lay hold on the public mind and excite it, arose out of the inexperience, the fanaticism, and the vile adulation of all that was extravagant in the ruling faction by interested or infatuated men.

M. Beugnot issued an ordonnance, forbidding any one to work on a Sunday—an abrupt change in the national habits and industry, which at least required time to bring about, as well as moderation and good sense not to render oppressive. Such an ordonnance applied by the majority of a people to a few objectors, may seem the right of the greater number; but when a few intruders, as inexperienced as incapable, seek to impose their views and habits on the great mass of the population, accustomed to other views and other habits, such pretensions have all the insolence of persecution.

There was no doubt room and matter for reform in the religious institutions and habits of the country, which Napoleon, in restoring, had so regulated as not to become dangerous or inimical to him. He had extended the iron hand of prohibition and of the police over the preaching of the clergy, and had silenced the pulpit as well as the press. If he forbade the clergy to open schools, and discountenanced any religious instruction other than what the colleges

and the professors gave, it was not that he gave freedom to education, or sought to liberate the national mind from superstition. The clergy had, therefore, much reason in the clamour which they raised, in 1814, against the imperial system of education, as in the demands which they made to have at least their share in instructing the youth of the country.* But certain of the priesthood and their partizans at Court aimed at nothing short of substituting their influence in the University for the Imperial Dictatorship, and making public education over altogether to the Jesuits. Even the imperial organization of the higher clergy was to be swept clean away. Napoleon had sufficiently humbled and set aside that portion of the priesthood, which had accepted the Republic and the civil constitution of the clergy. There remained, however, some prelates and clergy of that conforming and liberal school. These were now to be got rid of, and in order to do so, it was proposed to abolish the *Concordat*, and to give up to Rome the prerogative of nominating bishops, which Napoleon, as chief of the State, had wisely retained. The obstacle to this complete revolution, this destruction of the national church, was prevented, not by any voice of French remonstrance or opposition, but by the good sense of the Pope and of Cardonal Gonsalvi, who recommended the unfledged statesmen of the Tuileries to proceed more moderately and prudently in the way of High Church restoration. Not a few of the clergy set up an ultramontanism of their own, and displayed a zeal, calculated to keep pace with the frenzied enthusiasm of the Royalists. Then France was covered with ceremonies, and monuments, and vows of expiation for crimes, or for deeds committed

* See Lamennais' pamphlet, "Liberté d'Enseignment," 1814.

during the quarter of a century of Revolution. Some of these were but just reparation and the fulfilment of a sacred duty, against which not even the most ulcerated revolutionist could demur. When the remains of the unfortunate Louis XVI. and his Queen were disinterred from the cemetery of the Madeleine, where they had so long lain unhonoured, and transferred with solemnity to Saint Denis, Chateaubriand relates, that he was present at the exhumation, and that he recognized in the osseous remains of the skull of Marie Antoinette the smile with which the unfortunate Queen had graciously received him at Versailles!

Had the clergy confined its zeal to the celebration of acts of expiation, the public would not have been moved, and could not have complained. Mademoiselle de Raucourt, the celebrated actress, died about this time. She had been remarkable for the piety of her later years, as well as for her bounty towards the poor and clergy of her parish, which was that both of the Court and the French theatre. When her body was brought to the church of St. Roch to receive the funeral prayers previous to burial, the iron grating in front of the church was found closed. The priests of the church had revived those ancient prejudices which had existed before the Revolution, against admitting comedians to the rites of Christian sepulture. The friends who were accompanying the remains of Mademoiselle de Raucourt expostulated with the clergy of St. Roch. They were determined not to say prayers over the body of an actress. During the parley a crowd collected, and grew gradually more indignant as the cause of the disturbance was made known to them. Impatience and disgust soon swelled to imprecations against the

Government and the priests, the mob broke down the grating, entered the body of the church forcibly with the remains of Mademoiselle de Raucourt, and peremptorily demanded a priest to perform the funeral ceremony; whilst the police outside and the new *mousquetaires* of the Court were totally unable to penetrate the throng or disperse it. Fortunately it was but a few steps to the Tuileries, from which the monarch might even have heard the tumult, nor was there any cause for which he would have been less prone to disturb the public tranquillity; for Louis XVIII., though dominated by his brother and his niece, and yielding to the suggestions of the clergy rather than joining in their zeal, was a sincere lover of dramatists and the drama, whilst he was but a lukewarm and hypocritical adherent of religion, at least in its fanatical observances. The King, therefore, despatched a priest of his household to read the proper prayers over the remains of De Raucourt; and the insurrection which was rising, sunk for the moment into a more general feeling of derision and disgust.

Sentiments very similar to this were excited in the entire population of Paris, about the same time, by a solemn procession, which the clergy thought fit to lead through the streets, in honour of the Virgin Mary, not merely as a personage of Scripture, but as the special protectress of France. How she had become so was explained in a letter of Louis XVIII. to the French prelates, not one word of which letter Louis XVIII. believed. Indeed the monarch would have been the first to smile at the idea of France having been placed under the especial protection of the Virgin, by the most astute, most cruel, and ignoble of monarchs, Louis XI. The King in England

attributed his restoration to the Prince Regent, in Paris he was equally complimentary in announcing to the clergy, that he owed it altogether to the interference of the Blessed Virgin. These acts, too shamefully hypocritical and too broadly extravagant, were more worthy of the latitude of Madrid than of Paris, and completed that contempt of the Bourbons, of which their followers were so largely sowing the seeds.

No more excellent institutions existed than the schools, founded by Napoleon, for the orphan daughters of the members of the Legion of Honour. These schools were of different kinds. Whilst at St. Denis, the daughter of the general officer, who perished in war, would receive the education and accomplishments suitable to her expectations and rank; the daughter of the brave peasant, who perished likewise adorned with the cross of the order, was bred up at Loges in the knowledge of those household duties, which form the worth of the farmer's or the citizen's wife. The schools of the latter kind, those most wanted and most prized, were suppressed. The whole system of charity and education for military orphans was subverted, and proofs of noblesse were demanded for admission to those schools which remained. If it had been proposed as a problem and a task to render the name and the system of Napoleon once more popular by contrast with that which succeeded it, the ministers of Louis XVIII. could not have acted better for the purpose than they did.

It was perceived, nevertheless, in high quarters, that far from becoming reconciled to the Bourbons, the spirit of the army was daily becoming worse, and military disaffection gaining ground. The blame was thrown upon General Dupont, who certainly had shown neither con-

sistency nor wisdom. It was resolved, therefore, to replace him by Soult. That Marshal, since the fall of Napoleon, had seemed merely to be jealous of the superior favour which Ney and Marmont enjoyed and had earned by their early defection. Soult, therefore, took every opportunity of rivalling and imitating their royalist zeal. He was rewarded by the military command of Brittany. In this position he distinguished himself by subscribing largely to the monument proposed to be raised on the beach of Quiberon to the unfortunate emigrants, who had fallen there under the fire of the republicans.

Having been appointed to the War Office, one of his first acts was to display his severity towards General Excelmans. This general, the comrade and friend of Murat, was rejoiced to find that the Congress of European powers had determined to recognize him as King of Naples. Excelmans wrote to Murat to congratulate him on the simple fact. The letter intrusted to a traveller was seized upon him and brought back to Paris. M. de Blacas considered it a crime. Louis XVIII. thought it merely necessary that General Excelmans should be warned to be more circumspect for the future. Soult, on the contrary, saw in the circumstance a good occasion for showing his zeal and admonishing the army. He therefore placed Excelmans on half-pay, and bade him retire to Bar. Excelmans replied, that the Countess his wife was about to be confined, and he therefore besought a suspension of the order, especially as he had amassed no wealth in his campaigns. Soult, irritated at the answer, which appeared to allude to his rapacity as a commander, ordered Excelmans to be arrested and brought off under guard to Soissons. Excelmans declared he would resist, and when a body of

troops came to his residence in the morning to arrest him, Excelmans exclaimed to the officer in command, that he would fire on the first who attempted to lay hands upon him. Having said this, he managed to escape by a back door, and take refuge with one of his friends, whence he petitioned the Chamber, appealed to the public, agitated the press, and made use of all those means of self-defence and annoyance of which a constitutional system admits, but which being quite new to Marshal Soult as Minister of War, most sadly perplexed and discomfited that functionary.

It was a discussion on this affair of Excelmans, which closed the Session of 1814, manifesting at once the reactionary spirit and complete incapacity of the Government, beyond the power of such a Chamber, as that allowed to survive, to offer either remedy, succour or advice.

CHAPTER V.

CONGRESS OF VIENNA—PRETENSIONS OF TALLEYRAND—CLAIM OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA TO ABSORB POLAND AND SAXONY—NEWS OF ALLIANCE BETWEEN AUSTRIA, ENGLAND, AND FRANCE—DIVISION OF SAXONY—SETTLEMENT OF BELGIUM—RETURN OF NAPOLEON FROM ELBA—FLIGHT OF THE KING.

WHILST the princes, ministers, and champions of the Restoration were thus labouring to render the nation discontented and disgusted with the new rulers, and with its miscalled Constitutional Government, the only able man in his specialty, Prince Talleyrand, had assumed the difficult part of defending the interests and preserving the dignity of France at Vienna. A Congress of the Plenipotentiaries of all the powers of Europe had been summoned to meet there; but domestic affairs, consequent upon the change from war to peace had occupied the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia, so that they could not repair immediately to Vienna, and the meeting of the Plenipotentiaries did not take place until the month of October.

The Congress had been summoned, as most of the political acts of the day were decided upon, without its being well defined on what relations or with what respective powers the members should meet. Whilst France was

called to send a Plenipotentiary to the meeting, the sovereigns who had triumphed in the late campaigns were still leagued together, and mutually styled each other *Allies*, determined to impose certain arrangements on France, not to consult her as to their fitness. Two of the allies, moreover, Russia and Prussia, had entered into private stipulations with each other as to the new demarcation of European territory, unknown to the other allies; and none of the great powers were disposed to listen or bow to the opinion of the lesser ones in the future arrangements of either Europe or even Germany. The Congress, therefore, which was about to be opened for the discussion and decision of those great questions by envoys from different countries, very much resembled in character the Parliaments, which it was proposed to summon and establish in different countries, but to which it was considered neither safe, convenient, nor necessary to intrust the fulness or the fairness of representative rights.

Russia and Prussia, which had views of territorial aggrandisement, and which aimed at appropriating to themselves those countries conquered and occupied by their armies, were for confining the superior authority of Congress to the four great allies. Talleyrand remonstrated, and appealed to England, whose minister could not but abet a more liberal allowance to common and general rights. The Northern powers were obliged to admit all those who had signed the treaty of Paris, and thus it resulted that the committee destined to prepare the basis of territorial rearrangement consisted of eight, being Austria, England, France, Prussia, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, and Russia. All proposals to submit any question to the united Congress, until it had been irrevocably settled by the greater powers,

were, however, positively resisted; the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia, and even of Austria, having no idea of submitting their claims to the discussion of an assembly, where as in a Parliament the majority made law.

The pretensions of the chief powers, indeed, and the principles on which their pretensions were founded, were in truth not such as bear or abide discussion. Nor were the pleas of the victors of Europe in anywise different from those put forward by him whom they had conquered—the right of conquest and the law of force.

The Emperor of Russia demanded to keep Poland and incorporate it with Russia, because the acquisition suited him, and had been made by his arms. Prussia demanded Saxony as its share of the spoil, the Saxon King having remained the firm ally of France and Napoleon, and as perishing justly with the support and the system to which he clung.

These their several views, Russia and Prussia had communicated to each other, and had promised mutually to support.

The views of English statesmen towards the Continent were for the most part originally liberal and fair. They had a strong sense of the justice and wisdom of resuscitating Poland, and restoring it to independence, and they had also a wish to see Germany and its several states endowed with constitutional liberties and representative rights. But they were far from taking up the broad principle of nationality, or admitting the right of a country, separated from all others by marked geographical limits, and peopled by races with the same traditions and the same tongue, to be spared the oppression of a foreign yoke, and to be allowed at least a national government

and sovereign, whatever degree of liberty they were prepared for or might attain. This would have implied the freedom of Italy from Austria, as well as of Poland from Russia, and was more than England could take upon herself to abet or to assert.

The balance of power weighed more with English statesmen, at the moment, than nationality or any other element of stability. To erect bulwarks against the two great aggressive powers of France and Russia was the anxiety of England; and this it at first hoped to do by establishing Poland as an independent power on the Vistula, and by erecting a new kingdom of Dutch and Flemings united, which, consolidated by constitutional government, might form a permanent barrier against French extension towards the North.

With respect to the Prussian demand of Saxony, the English diplomatists favoured it, thinking that Prussia must be indemnified for the sacrifice of her share of Poland, and that the great Protestant powers of Germany ought to be rendered compact and strong. But all the ire and jealousy of Austria arose at the prospect of Prussia's so largely extending and strengthening her power in Germany, by absorbing the territories of a power which had always been a faithful ally of the Court of Vienna. France also entertained similar views with respect to Saxony, not only from its being the victim of French connexion, but from the traditional feeling of France having ever been to support the lesser German States against the greater, and to keep up, by these means, a third power in Germany, as a counterpoise to the two great monarchic ones. As it was impossible for England to carry its point with respect to Poland, or the Low Countries, without the support of

Austria, it was compelled to join the Austrian defence of Saxony, and thus, before Congress had been many weeks old, three of its five great Powers were arrayed against the other two.

In these disputes, the great ability of Prince Talleyrand was most conspicuous; and he it was, who seemed to turn round his finger, as the phrase is, the representatives of those countries, who, flushed with triumph, scarcely deigned at first to let France into their Councils. In behalf of the King of Saxony, Talleyrand invoked the highest principles of conservatism and the indefeasible right of monarchs, which, to set aside, he declared, was opening out again, and recommencing the crimes and the principles of revolution, instead of condemning and putting a stop to them for ever. Whilst smiling at such arguments in the mouth of one who had aided Napoleon in carving out Europe with his sword, one is astonished to find that Talleyrand carried not only his opposition, but that of Austria and of England so far, as that a treaty was actually signed between them on the 30th of February, 1815, of mutual support and alliance against the pretensions or attempts of Russia and Prussia. In case of war on the part of these two Powers, each of the three allies was to furnish an army of 150,000 men to oppose them. England was thus engaged to fit out and pay an army of 150,000 men on the Continent, in order that the Saxons should be ruled by a sovereign at Dresden instead of by one at Berlin; and in order that Poland, instead of remaining one under Russia (for all thought of its absolute independence had been long since given up), should be divided between the three environing powers.

If England, and the best prospects of Germany, and of

Poland were to be consulted in this matter, it would have been far more desirable to give up Saxony to complete and render compact the great Protestant kingdom of the North, whilst for the regeneration of Poland, it would have been far better, and more hopeful to unite it, even under Russian sovereignty, than to carve definitively that ancient nation into three, and by this division interest the three great environing monarchies in the permanent extinction of Poland and its nationality.

In the settlement of Poland, at least one of two things ought to have been looked to, either the intrinsic strength of Poland to keep itself independent under a Russian sovereign, so as to command his respect, necessitate his conciliation, or resist his tyranny. This might have been attained by keeping Poland united, compensating Austria elsewhere for Gallicia, the possession of which gives her a weak and indefensible frontier; whilst Prussia was ready and willing to surrender Posen for all Saxony. In this position the two great German Powers might have guaranteed the independence of Poland, which would thus have formed a separation and a safeguard for Russia. If, however, this arrangement was objectionable and unattainable, and if there was no other way of settling Poland but by dividing it, one of the results of which would be to leave the fragments of it devolving to Russia altogether Russian, it was then important to erect some other defences against Russia, instead of giving up to it, not only both sides of the Vistula, but a territory so advanced into the heart of Europe, as to be within a day's march of Berlin; Russia thus extending between Austria and Prussia into the very heart of Germany. Such, however, was the final arrangement. Lord Castlereagh, called away to take part

in the debates of Parliament, and anxious not to be compelled to admit there that the members of Congress were still not in accord as to the very first and principal point of the redistribution of Europe, bestirred himself to bring about a compromise. In this way every great object and principle was lost sight of, save that of plastering up the breach. The nationality of Poland was destroyed by its division, its independence rendered hopeless, even for the portion given to Russia without any serious or efficient stipulation. Germany was left open to the aggressions of Russia, by the military posts of the latter power being advanced to Kalisch, thus turning and rendering utterly useless all the line of fortresses which, including Thorn, Prussia was allowed to possess on the Lower Vistula. As sovereign of the chief portion, or nucleus of Poland, Russia was entitled to look forward to the future mastery over the whole race, as neither Prussia nor Austria could look to retain more than temporarily the provinces allotted to them. In short, the English plenipotentiary failed altogether in the aim of placing a just limit or efficient check to the encroachments or despotism of Russia, although, to attain this object, he had joined Austria in weakening the power of Prussia, and preventing it from assuming the shape and dimensions of a strong, compact, German kingdom.

Unfortunately for herself, Prussia, in coming before Congress, adopted the mode introduced by Napoleon, of appreciating territorial acquisitions and valuing empire. He was wont himself, and he taught other European princes likewise, to count by heads of population, as by heads of cattle. A prince was lord over so many millions of souls, which he was good enough to suppose so many

millions of human heads, to be divided, disposed of, slaughtered, or enslaved. Prussia came provided with this same political vocabulary, pleaded that its sovereignty counted ten millions under its sway before the peace of Tilsit, and demanded that these ten millions should be made up, where, or how, seemed not essential. Prussia declared it had lost one half of its ten millions, taken by Napoleon. It had, at the conclusion of the war, reconquered two of these millions—it wanted three more. Saxony very nearly supplied them; the King of that country, by his anti-German policy, having forfeited his right to remain a German monarch. But Prussia offered the dispossessed monarch compensation, and the same number of subjects in Luxemburg, and on the left bank of the Rhine. The proposal did not suit English views, which were directed, indeed absorbed in the project of aggrandizing the house of Orange, and establishing it finally as sovereign of the whole of the Low Countries, and giving it Luxemburg as a link with Germany. The Prussian claim of Saxony was compromised, as the Russian one of Poland had been. The Saxons, without the least regard for their national feelings, or loyal attachment, were split into two; Lower Saxony being made over to Prussia, Leipsic and the Bohemian frontier being preserved to the King.

Thus the great internal mart of trade, Leipzig, was separated by two or even three frontiers from Hamburg, its natural outlet to the sea; and the most manufacturing district in Germany was reduced to a narrow circle, deprived of its local market and excluded from every other. But the statesmen of the Vienna Congress had no commercial anxieties or interests. Dynastic prospects and military strength alone occupied their minds, as if man

could be considered in no other light than as a soldier or a subject. In recompense of that portion of Saxony which she did not obtain, Prussia was presented with the greater part of Westphalia, and of a large border on both sides of the Rhine, which placed her in contact with France, and made her the sovereign of a people who could have no feeling of allegiance or attachment to the cause of Prussia. Belonging of old to the ecclesiastical Electors, and since their destruction governed as a French department, the inhabitants of the Rhenish provinces were every way unfitted for making part of a German kingdom, governed by superannuated laws, and professing a religion antagonistic to them. The notion of surrounding France on its northern frontier by districts and populations transferred to a foreign sovereign, for whom they could feel no affection, and with whose every act they were soon to find fault, was abetted by England as the only efficient check upon French ambition, and was combated as such by Prince Talleyrand, whilst in truth the arrangement was precisely that which left most chances and prospects for French extension, and rendered disaffection, turbulence, and rebellion, the inevitable prospect of the entire north of Europe.

What was wanting to Congress and to its members was some sound and acknowledged principle for the disposal and distribution of the European soil. Anterior and hereditary rights, based on the assumption that heads of population and square miles of territory were merely to be treated as other kinds of property, this raised by the right of conquest, and checked by the necessity of preserving the balance of power, formed the only principle considered or consulted at Vienna. England, indeed, had another care, a higher anxiety, which was in some measure par-

ticipated in by the Emperor Alexander, but with respect to which all the other powers and plenipotentiaries were ignorant or indifferent. This was the necessity of maintaining the continuance of peace by satisfying the general aspirations of all the educated and middle classes of Europe for political liberty and civil freedom. The English Ministers, practical and able in the trodden paths of public life, were not very profound philosophers. England had thriven under a Constitution, and they therefore thought a Constitution the great panacea for the most advanced as for the backward State,—for Poland as for Portugal. They did not perceive that there are deeper griefs and ills, such, for instance, as that of one people or one religion subjected and inferior to another, which inequality the grant of constitutional rights is only calculated to remedy by putting into the hands of the minority the means of resistance. How easily these are converted from the moral and constitutional into the violent and rebellious; and how naturally the offended government or nation, when victorious, confiscates those liberties which have been employed as weapons against them, Lord Castlereagh, as an Irishman and politician, might have known; yet he thought he had established the throne of the Low Countries on the solid basis of a Constitution. He hoped that Poland and the German States might in the same way secure their independence; nay, the mere name of a Constitution, without much consideration of the faith with which it was observed, or the spirit in which it was directed, was deemed capable of satisfying French susceptibility, and reconciling the irritated and humbled French to a dynasty identified with its disgrace and repugnant to its recollections.

If such sanguine hopes were entertained of France under a constitutional dynasty, more of course could be entertained of Belgium and Holland, forming a united, free, and contented commonwealth. It was made part of their fundamental law that Dutch and Flemings should have equal share of representative power in Parliament. In order that the new kingdom might not want a valuable colony, or be deprived of its ancient trade to, and influence in, the far hemisphere, England, whilst retaining the barren Cape, as a naval station, restored the fertile Java to the Dutch; and, however Lord Castlereagh has been blamed for the act, it may be considered to have been as politic as it was just, England having already more colonial possessions than her population or her capital could suffice.

The labours of Congress, or of the Special Committee, had not completed the task of constituting Germany as a Federation, and fixing the respective territories of each sovereign, when the return of Napoleon from Elba placed all such decisions in doubt and such arrangements in abeyance. It had merely been decided that Austria should recover the territories which it had possessed in Italy before the Revolution, and that she should complete them by those of the Venetian States. The Tyrol, at the same time, being restored, united the territories of Austria from Bologna and Cattaro to the confines of Saxony, and from the extremity of Gallicia, bordering on the Pruth, to the banks of the Ticino. An empire so vast, though composed of so many different races and countries, was sufficient to compensate the House of Austria for the loss of that vain crown of the German Empire, which brought with it but empty dignity and contested rights.

What concerned France more intimately was the adjunc-

tion of the city and territory of Genoa to Piedmont, accomplished for the purpose of getting rid of a turbulent republic, and of giving strength, with an important port in the Mediterranean, to one of the powers destined to complete the line of defence against the so-much-dreaded ambition and encroachments of France.

A great deal of obloquy has been heaped upon Congress in general for its absorption of civic republics, and upon England especially, from one of its commanders having made a kind of promise of independence to the Genoese to induce them to surrender. A solemn stipulation, however rashly made, ought to have been observed; nor should the independence of an ancient republic be less respected than the rights of a family of princes. Still it must be admitted that the days of these civic republics were past. They may have been necessary in an age when commercial freedom did not exist, and commercial interests were not understood, and when the maintenance of the sole principle by which these can prosper at home, and fitly employ the power which makes them be respected abroad, were not to be hoped from feudal and despotic sovereigns.

Then commerce concentrated in great seaports, in great central emporiums, needed self-government and municipal independence in order to exist; now, however, that the necessities of commerce and a commercial class are better understood, it is not good that these should separate themselves, and stand apart from the country in which they are placed, to which they act as factors, and of the population and sinew of which they form a part. Better for all parties that Genoa should be part of north-western Italy, and Venice of north-eastern, with such a government in both as is compatible with a port

and a mart, than that a jealous frontier should divide the seaboard from the land, and render the interests, ideas, and classes of the one strange and inimical to the other. The governments into which Venice and Genoa became absorbed, may not have at first been enlightened or fit sovereigns of such cities; but the very possession of such cities taught liberal necessities and wisdom to their government, and their annexation to the country to which they belong naturally, is a progress to civilization, although at first there may be the appearance of a republic swallowed in an absolute monarchy. What a country wants to liberate and to advance it, is to have the interests and energies of a middle class mingled and continually active within it. Whatever separates them into distinct parts, or confederations, or castes, isolates and neutralizes the civilizing elements, renders it powerless even for development and self-aggrandizement, and dwarfs the country in its growth. As long, indeed, as a country is barbarous and feudal, the cities which are naturally formed at the mouths of great rivers, such as Venice, Hamburgh, Dantzic, may with advantage remain independent republics; but as the country around, and up the great stream, comes to progress and to attain popular acquirements, and when the government itself begins to show a liberal spirit, it is better that the men of the seaport should join in the common impulse and development, than retard or resist it by their isolation. Congress, however, was actuated by no motive of this kind. Republican Genoa, like monarchic Saxony, had shown a leaning to imperial France. Napoleon had made it the most southern port of his great empire, thus opening a large market to its manufactures and scope to its trade. Genoa was grateful, and was, therefore, to be punished. Prince

Talleyrand, though he supported the cause of Saxony, the victim of French connexion, did not extend a similar sympathy to Genoa. He had but one object in Italy, the one great interest impressed upon him by Louis XVIII.: this was, to dispossess Murat and restore the Bourbons of Naples to their continental as well as insular dominions.

Murat had remained unmolested in the possession of the throne of Naples, in consequence of a convention with Austria, by which he deserted Napoleon at his fall, and which, as Napoleon alleges, prevented Prince Eugene with his Italian army from marching to the Emperor's support. Notwithstanding, Murat's envoys were not acknowledged at the Congress of Vienna, and partly from mistrust hence arising, as well as from his close connexion with the family of Napoleon, he no doubt listened to their hopes and perhaps favoured their projects. As proofs of this appeared, Talleyrand pressed at Vienna for his removal; and it was felt that the presence of Napoleon at Elba, and of his brother-in-law at Naples, rendered every royal establishment in their neighbourhood insecure. Such mistrust, not concealed at Vienna, created similar mistrust at Naples and at Elba. There was a kind of war between the Bourbons and the Bonapartes. Murat armed. This, and his subsequent advance into the Romagna, so indisposed both Austria and England, that the Treaty between these two powers and France against Russian and Prussian encroachment, was said to include the restoration of the Bourbons to Naples. Informed or not of this, Murat soon flung off the mask, by asking permission of Austria to lead an army through North Italy against France. Austria replied by mustering a large army in Lombardy, and even the French King ordered the

concentration of troops in his south-eastern departments.

The spirit of the Bourbon government of France is sufficiently marked by the serious proposal introduced by the Home Minister, Montesquiou, in the Chamber of Peers, for the confiscation of all the property fixed or moveable that could be discovered in France as belonging to the Bonapartes. The Chamber of Peers would not entertain such a proposition, which, however, marked the spirit of the Court; and the Government acted upon it in every way which was in its power by withholding the sums stipulated at Napoleon's abdication to be paid to him or to his relations. The Bourbons and their party had no idea of political rights or government, save that founded on personal claims, personal attachments, personal enmities. The Bonapartes had nearly the same views; and a narrow antagonism arose between the families, far more inveterate, personal, and petty, on the part of the Bourbons. The existence of the two families in the same seas, or the same part of the world, was indeed impossible. The Allies of 1814 had foolishly made a settlement which could not endure; and although they threw the blame on the fickleness of the people, or the treachery of their chief, the only persons to blame were themselves, who had patched up a settlement of France and of Europe in ignorance and precipitation.

None laboured more strenuously for a catastrophe than the Bourbons, who, whilst indisposing every party in France, did everything at the same time to provoke Napoleon, and to afford him the pretext, the right, the incentives, and the facilities for returning to France. The sapient members of the Congress of Vienna laboured by

the same means towards the same end. For not only were their language and proposals of a nature to inspire Napoleon with mistrust of Europe's observing its engagements towards him, but the quarrel between France, England, and Austria on one side, with Russia and Prussia on the other, as to how the spoils of Napoleon should be divided, inspired that fallen potentate with the belief that the alliance which had overcome him was already dissolved, and that there was no longer a united Europe to resist or punish his return.

Fully informed of all that occurred, as well as of all that was said and thought in Paris, by faithful followers, such as the Dukes of Bassano and Rovigo, as well as by his relative Hortense, who, owing to the intervention of the Emperor of Russia, enjoyed her fortune and her hotel in Paris, making them the support and the rendezvous of the Bonapartists, Napoleon could not but have foreseen the possibility and conceived the plan of returning to France. His enemies did not suspect him of so bold a design. They who had so lately seen him obliged to recur to a disguise to escape the maledictions of the population along the high road to the south, could not expect to see him return by such a route. They deemed his views turned towards Italy, and they attributed much of the effervescence of that country to his vicinity and his machinations. But it was not from any population, however indignant, that he could hope for retrieval. That could only be achieved by an army. And France contained that army, his old army, which had been neither broken nor remodified, and which in every camp and garrison teemed with soldiers irritated and humiliated, and with officers maddened by the closing of their pro-

spects and profession, by the degradation of the country, and the eclipse of its military renown. Each emissary, each bearer of news, brought to Elba tidings of conspiracy in different corps, of different Generals obedient to a sentiment and to the expression of a desire too universal to permit a compact, secret, well-directed plot. Every one, in fact, would have a hand in the conspiracy, which, in fact, rendered it impossible. A thousand schemes and schemers, Fouché, Carnot, and men similarly placed, thought themselves each called on to provide in their way for the safety of the commonwealth. So that prudent men, like Davoust, to whom the lead and command was offered, shrunk from becoming the chief of an enterprise which was every one's business, and nobody's secret.

Civilians had played a part in the Restoration, diplomatists had disposed of crowns, and a legislative body had overthrown one dynasty to establish another in its place. General officers, therefore, checked the eagerness to overthrow the Bourbons by the necessity of combining with some political and civilian party, which could satisfy the public, negotiate with Europe, procure funds, and furnish expenses for the conduct of the Government. The conspirators of 1815 did not believe, like those of 1791 and 1848, that Government was a machine which could perform its functions of itself, however inexperienced the hand applied to it. But no class of civilians liked Napoleon. No rational or liberal man out of uniform, however detesting the Bourbons, desired the return of Bonaparte; and there was thus a gulf between the Imperialists and the Liberals—the army and the educated class—which the Bourbons might have taken advantage of to consolidate their throne. A few of the leading men

of the Constitutionalists regarded the Duke of Orleans as the only personage who could play in France a part analogous to that of William of Orange in England. But the Duke of Orleans was comparatively unknown. He had been a soldier, certainly, and had preserved his dignity in exile, and a certain attitude of liberal moderation since his return. But neither the army nor the French people knew the Duke of Orleans, whilst even for the educated to conceive hopes of him was to become more acquainted with English liberty and constitutional theories, than was as yet common in France. The election of the Duke of Orleans to the throne, therefore, a difficult task for the Allied Powers on their entering Paris, was then impossible as the result of either a military or a popular insurrection. The name being put forward, however, and the Prince thought on, came as a strong incentive to Napoleon to lose no time in returning to make a personal appeal to the French army, before another military General rose up, or before the civilian spirit, so hostile to him, had matured its plans, and rallied round a constitutional candidate for the throne.

There is a very circumstantial and graphic account of a visit paid to Napoleon at Elba by an emissary of the Duke de Bassano, M. Fleury de Chaboulon, the information brought by whom seemed to have hastened the determination, no doubt long before taken by Napoleon, to reappear in France. He found himself in Napoleon's cabinet on the 22nd of February. He was at first obliged to listen to the reflections of an abdicated monarch resigned to his fate; but as Fleury gave proofs of his being in Bassano's confidence, Napoleon warmed, imbibed gratifying proof after proof of the Bourbon unpopularity, and con-

cluded by asking categorically, was it the Duc de Bassano's opinion that he should return to France. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he would think of it. The next day Napoleon summoned the emissary, and announced to him his intention of returning to France about the 1st of April, at the head of his guard merely, and with the determination of marching straight upon Paris, without loss of time. "I will forget everything, and pardon everything," Napoleon said. "I am ready to give both to France and to Europe all the guarantees they can demand. Projects of aggrandizement I abandon, and merely seek to terminate by a solid peace the ills which war has produced. Tell Bassano, however," said Napoleon, "that should the follies of the Bourbons precipitate their fall before I arrive, let there be no Regency. I will not hear of any such thing."

On the evening of the 26th, Napoleon embarked in the few small vessels found in the port, with 900 men, and with these he landed in the little Gulf of Juan, which lies between Cannes and Antibes, on the afternoon of the 1st of March. The spot where he landed and the route which he pursued through the sparsely-inhabited and ill-informed districts at the foot of the Alps, showed that the purpose of Napoleon was to appeal to the military in the first instance, and that, secure of their adherence, he might count on the favour, or at least the neutrality, of those who were not soldiers. The following is the address which he had drawn up, and which was distributed at first in manuscript, ere it could be printed at Digne, to the army:—

"Soldiers! We have not been conquered. Two men who sprung from our ranks betrayed our laurels as well

as their benefactor and Prince. Those whom we have seen traversing Europe for twenty-five years to excite enmity towards us, and who have passed their life combating against us in foreign armies, cursing our beautiful France, shall they pretend to command and enchain our eagles, those who never dared to look them in the face? Shall we suffer them to inherit the fruits of our glorious labours? Shall they take possession of our honours and our fortune whilst they calumniate our glory? If their reign should endure, all would be lost, even the memory of our immortal victories. With what inveteracy do they calumniate us. They seek to poison that which is the source of admiration to the world, and if there yet be any who stand up for our glory, they are to be found among those very enemies whom we have combated on the field of battle.

"Soldiers! I heard your voice in my exile, and I hastened to it through every obstacle and through every peril. Your General, called to the throne by the voice of the people, and borne aloft on your bucklers, is restored to you; come and join him. Tear down those colours which the nation has proscribed, and which during five and twenty years served as the rallying-point for all the enemies of France. Mount that tricolor cockade which you wore in the days of victory. We ought to forget that we were lords of other nations, but we must not permit these nations to interfere with us. Who can pretend to be master over us? Who has the power? Resume those eagles which you had at Ulm, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Eylau, at Friedland, at Tudela, at Eckmühl, at Essnlig, at Wagram, at Smolensko, at la Moskowa, at Lutzen, at Bautzen, at Montmirail! Do you think that handful

of Frenchmen now so arrogant could have faced those eagles? Let them return whence they came, and reign there if they like, as they pretend to have done for the last nineteen years. Your grades, your property, your glory, the good, the rank, the glory of your children, have no greater enemies than the princes whom strangers have imposed upon you. They are the enemies of your glory, condemned as they are by the recital of so many glorious actions which have rendered illustrious the French people combating to escape their yoke. The veterans of the armies of the Sambre and Meuse, of the Rhine, of Italy, of Egypt, of the West, of the Great Army, are humiliated; their honourable scars are disgraced; their successes would be counted as crimes; these brave men would be but rebels, if, as our enemies pretend, our legitimate sovereigns were in the midst of the enemy. Honours, recompenses, affection, are for those who served against the country and against us.

"Soldiers! range yourselves under the banners of your chief. His existence depends on yours; his rights are but yours and those of the people; his interest, his honour, and his glory are no other than yours. Victory will march with the speed of a charge; the Eagle with the national colours will fly from steeple to steeple unto the towers of Nôtre Dame. You may then boast of what you have done: you will be the deliverers of your country.

"In your old age, surrounded and respected by your fellow-citizens, you will relate your great deeds, and you will be able to say with pride: And I also was one of that Great Army which entered twice into Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, Moscow, and which washed out from Paris the stain incurred by treason and the presence of the enemy.

"Honour to those brave soldiers, the glory of the country, and eternal shame to those criminal Frenchmen, whatever may be their rank or their fortune, who fought five-and-twenty years with the foreigner in order to tear open the bosom of their country.

"NAPOLEON."

The trying moment was the first encounter of the Emperor and his little troop with the soldiers posted to resist his passage. He was aware that a considerable number of troops had been mustered in Grenoble, and in the departments bordering on Italy. The advance of Murat from Naples had alarmed the Bourbon Government, and Prince Talleyrand had demanded the formation of an army in the south, not only to oppose him, but to display to Congress that Louis XVIII. could muster and command a military force. Napoleon hoped to reach some portion of this army before any especial orders or Royalist commanders could arrive from Paris. He marched twenty leagues, he traversed Grasse and Digne, and was fortunately able to pass the Durance, under the fortress of Sisteron, without obstacle. Some Royalists proposed to break down the bridge which passed under the fortress, but the populace would not permit them. It was not till the 7th of March, that is, after a march of 150 miles, which took nearly a week to accomplish, that Napoleon found his passage opposed by a body of Royalist troops. They were about 1000 men, and were posted at Vizille, behind the Isere, only a few leagues from Grenoble. An officer sent on from the Imperialist troops was threatened with being fired at. It was then that Napoleon dismounted, and advanced alone, his gre-

nadiers with reversed arms following at a distance, he himself clad in his grey surtout, that did not conceal the white facings of the uniform which covered his breast. Silence was observed in the ranks as he approached them. Stopping when at about twenty paces, Napoleon took off his hat, saluted them, and said: "Soldiers of the 5th Regiment, if there is one amongst you who desires to kill his old General, his Emperor, he may do so. I am here." The appeal, once allowed to be made, was, of course, resistless, and was answered by a loud shout of "Vive l'Empereur!" With this shout the revolution was consummated. The soldiers in Grenoble had but one idea, one determination, that of joining the Emperor; and Labédoyère, when he led the regiment of which he was colonel, did but follow the stream.

The Bourbons and their ministers in Paris were in the mean time slumbering in full security. Several of the old revolutionary party had lifted up their voices to give warning. Carnot published his opinion in a memorable pamphlet. Talleyrand before his departure for Vienna had entreated the King to gain Fouché, and employ him as head of the police. The odium of a regicide was at that time intolerable to Louis XVIII., who thought he had done enough in that direction by appointing Soult to the War Office. There Soult worked far more harm than good. He was always in extremes. He sought to banish all half-pay officers from Paris; but they imitated Excelmans, remained, and defied him. On learning the resistance of Talleyrand in conjunction with Austria against Russia and Prussia, he proposed to strengthen French diplomacy by an army of 400,000 men. Barras at the same time sought an interview with the King, to whom he

said he had important facts to disclose. M. De Blacas saw Barras, who said he would only tell his secret to the King, but warned him that danger was near. The King would not see Barras. The Duke and Duchess of Angoulême had set out for the south, in order to awaken the fervour of loyalty in the population. From Bordeaux the Duchess of Angoulême wrote word, that she found no difficulty with respect to citizens and civilians; but the army, which she encountered in that city, she denounced, soldiers and officers, as disaffected. A Royalist general officer, who inspected the garrison of Metz about the same time, was struck by its attitude. It was "like a convent," he said, "with one soul, obedient to a superior influence." The soldiers performed their military duties scrupulously, but refused to join in any amusement, so deep was their sense of humiliation, so ardent their thirst of revenge. It was the Old Guard that had been sent to form the garrison of Metz and to occupy Lorraine, whose aspect is thus described. There was no need of any especial conspiracy for Napoleon to present himself before such an army, and be received as its idol.*

The first tidings of the landing and march of Napoleon reached M. de Vitrolles (Minister of the Secretaryship of State) at one o'clock on the afternoon of the 5th. He rushed to inform the King, who did not at first see the gravity of the event. He ordered Soult to be informed of it, in order that the War Minister might take the due precaution. Soult perplexed, telegraphed to Lyons, that he would send orders for the morrow. The Count d'Artois was despatched to Lyons, with the Duke of Orleans, who

* See "Castlereagh Papers"—Letter of the Duke of Wellington to Lord Castlereagh, October 9th, 1814.

in vain asked to be spared the mission. In the interview which the Duke had with the King on this occasion he confessed the views of some of the constitutional party to set him on the throne; and he recommended the King for this reason to allow him to remain in Paris. Macdonald was to accompany them. The Duke of Bourbon, or *Chou Chou*, as the Duchess of Angoulême called him, was bidden to take the command in La Vendée. The Duke of Berri was to proceed to Franche Comté; but when recollecting that Ney was governor of that province, Ney so obstreperous in his loyal zeal, it was thought better not to interfere with existing arrangements, but to leave him to deal with the military intruder. Ney hastened to kiss the royal hand upon this mark of confidence, and at the same moment exclaimed that, "Bonaparte should pay dearly for his audacity; I will bring him to your Majesty, bound hand and foot, in an iron cage." "Go," said Louis, in reply to the Marshal; "I count upon your devotion and fidelity."

Marshal Soult, in an order of the day, was not less violent in his denunciations of the usurper. "What did he want?—Civil war. What seek?—Traitors. Bonaparte despises us enough to believe that we can quit a legitimate and beloved sovereign to share the fate of an adventurer." After some hours' interval, both Soult and Ney were in Napoleon's service and confidence. What must we think of such men? That they were serious in behalf of that cause which they for the moment thought triumphant. Ignorant alike of public principle, and not reared with that gentlemanly feeling, which makes attachment to a chief or a cause a point of honour, they consulted but their own interests and the prospects of the future, and had not the

judgment to see these aright. They are melancholy proofs that heroism may exist, nay, may continue to command popular admiration, without almost the smallest particle of either virtue or intelligence.

Louis XVIII. was not long deceived as to the gravity of the event, which he at once called a *complot*. He resolved to convoke the Chamber, a step which his councillors, who put no trust in constitutional means, openly deprecated. Louis persisted, and drew up himself the proclamation.

"We had adjourned the Chamber till the first of May," said this document: "during the interval we were preparing subjects for their deliberation. The result of the Congress of Vienna led me to hope for the establishment of a durable and general peace, and we gave ourselves up to those labours, which promised to secure the tranquillity and support of the people. That tranquillity is now broken, that happiness compromised by malevolence and treason. But the guilty shall be confounded by the promptitude and wisdom of our measures. Full of confidence in the zeal and devotion, of which the Chamber have given so many proofs, we hasten to summon them around us. If the enemies of the country have founded their hopes on the divisions which they sought to foment, its legal defenders will destroy the criminal hope by the unattackable force of their indestructible union."

Whilst the King thus placed his hopes in the Chamber and in moderation, the more violent demanded the arrest of some scores of confessed Bonapartists. M. D'André, Minister of Police, opposed such a measure, and declared, that he would not answer for the safety of the capital, if such extreme measures were resorted to. Each day, how-

ever, with its tidings of defection, brought authority to the violent Royalists. In obedience to their wishes, Soult was dismissed from the War Office, which was given to Clarke Duc de Feltre, and D'André was superseded in the police by Bourrienne, the ex-secretary and personal foe and maligner of Napoleon, who consented to proceed to a number of arrests. Fouché was one of those marked for capture—Fouché, who had tried to raise a military movement at Lille against Bonaparte, and in favour of the Duke of Orleans, and who, nevertheless, had a long and confidential interview with the Count d'Artois, slipped with ease through the clumsy fingers of Bourrienne's agents.

The vigilance or severity of the police were now too late to be of any avail. They were as fruitless as the military attempts of the royal Dukes and of Macdonald to defend Lyons. These had erected barricades and proposed to cut down the bridges. The populace, however, mingled with the soldiers and prevented them from proceeding to such work. "Cry *Vive le Roi!*" said one of the Princes, by way of trial to a veteran serjeant. "If I cry anything," replied the old soldier, "it must be *Vive l'Empereur!*" No sooner did the first Imperialists appear, than they were aided across the bridges, and were masters of Lyons: the Princes had already escaped; Macdonald did so with difficulty.

Napoleon paused two days at Lyons. He had struck the blow: his cause was irresistibly in the ascendant; and time would do more for him than he could do for himself. He felt that he might seize again upon the empire. In his progress and his proclamation from Cannes he had stooped to adopt republican language, and he addressed the French

as citizens. He no sooner found himself at the head of a respectable army, than they became *subjects* in his phraseology. At Lyons he issued a series of decrees, abolishing the changes in the magistracy, in the army, restoring the tricolor cockade and the Imperial Guard, sequestrating the property of the Bourbons, as well as all the estates and funds given to the emigrés from the resources of the Legion of Honour, the hospitals, or the parishes. Feudal and noble titles were declared to be suppressed. The last decree abolished the Charter and the two Chambers, and summoned the Electoral Colleges of the departments, those *Notables* of the empire, to meet in Paris in order to form an extraordinary Assembly of the *Champ de Mai*, for the purpose of modifying the constitution, and at the same to assist at the coronation of the Empress and her son.

Such a challenge to the Constitutionalists might well drive them to rally round the King. They needed no such provocation. None were more determined against Napoleon than De Stael, Constant, Lafayette, and the liberal minority of that powerless and unconstitutional Chamber of Deputies, which the Royalist Government had preserved. Consulted by the Court, they recommended the convocation of the National Guard, the nomination of a liberal ministry. Lafayette was proposed to command the citizen troops, and the Duke of Orleans was recommended, as more popular than the other Princes, to take a command; the Court would hear of neither one nor the other, and even Chateaubriand was simple enough to make the reasonable proposal to the Constitutional Deputies, "to rally round the throne and be slaughtered there, in order that their blood might become the seed of future

liberties." "Constant," says Lafayette, "could not but smile at this premium put upon loyalty."

"The President of the Chamber of Deputies," writes Lafayette, "informed them, that had not Bonaparte disembarked in France, laws had been prepared for the elections, for the liberty of the press, for the diminution of the excise, and for the meeting all public wishes. On the 12th, the King invited the troops to defend liberty, promising that henceforth their officers should be taken from their ranks; on the 15th motions were printed for restoring the half-pay officers to whole pay, and disbursing the arrears of the Legion of Honour.

These almost posthumous attempts to conciliate the army were of no avail—they were not listened to; nor were the appeals to the spirit and love of Constitutionalism in the middle class more successful. Civilians could no more believe in the liberalism, than soldiers could worship the heroism, of the Bourbons. Still Louis XVIII. took the most correct English examples for models. He repaired in person and in solemn ceremony to the Chamber of Deputies on the 16th, and addressed them in the following words:—

"MESSIEURS,

"AT this critical moment, when the public enemy has penetrated into a portion of my kingdom, and menaces the liberties of the rest, I come into the midst of you, in order to draw closer the bonds which unite us, and which constitute the force of the State. I have seen my country again; I have reconciled it with all foreign Powers, and they will, I have no doubt, show themselves faithful to those treaties which insured peace. I have laboured

for the happiness of my people, and every day receive the most touching marks of their love. Can I, at sixty, better terminate my career than in dying for its defence. I fear nothing for myself, all for France. He who seeks to light up amongst us the torch of civil war, brings at the same time the scourge of foreign war. He comes to replace the country under his yoke of iron; to destroy the Constitutional Charter which I gave, my noblest title in the eyes of posterity, which all Frenchmen cherish, and which I here swear to maintain. Let us rally round a standard so sacred. The descendant of Henry IV. will be the first to do so. Let the concurrence of the two Chambers lend to authority all the powers necessary to it; and this truly national war will prove, by its happy result, what a great people can do, animated by the love of its King, and the fundamental law of the State."

Even the enemies of the Bourbons admit that the address deeply moved the auditory, and that it was replied to with enthusiasm, and with cries of "Down with the Usurper! let us die with the King!" amidst the waving of handkerchiefs, and every manifestation of ardour and loyalty towards a prince whose reign gave the sole, if not the best, hopes of constitutional liberty. Some of the latter expressions of the King's address were evidently prepared to give his brother the opportunity of his expressing his too long withheld adherence to the Charter. The Count d'Artois, just returned from his fruitless expedition to Lyons, rose and approaching the throne, said,—

"Sire, I know that I err against established rules, in thus addressing your Majesty. I crave your pardon, if I seize this opportunity of expressing in my own name, and

that of my family, with what unanimity we participate, from the bottom of our hearts, in the sentiments and principles which animate the King."

Then turning to the Assembly, and stretching forth his hand, the Prince added,—

"We swear to die faithful to the King and to the Constitutional Charter."

The enthusiasm burst forth afresh at these words, and the Bourbons might fairly flatter themselves with having won Parliamentary support. But the Chamber of Deputies itself was not identified with the nation, and had no influence even with the citizens of Paris. When they were reviewed subsequently, and asked to form a volunteer Legion to defend the Crown and Constitution, scarcely a man stirred. The sentiments of the army were known to be unanimous, to be hostile, and, after all, neither unreasonable nor anti-national. The resolution was therefore unanimously and tacitly taken, to abide by the award, rather than obstruct the supreme military effort which Napoleon was about to make.

The most powerful and most vain protest was that of Benjamin Constant, who spoke the sentiments of the Constitutional party in a violent philippic. This is given below, in justice to the Marshals and military men, who made vows one day to the Bourbons, and the next passed over to Bonaparte. Constant, not illiterate, or rude, or thoughtless, like Ney or like Soult, a man of reflection, principle, and study, could pour forth the fierce denunciations on Napoleon's approach, yet allow himself, within a few days, not merely to forego all this inveteracy, and to be drawn into contact with the Emperor, but to believe in the sincerity of his promises to give a Constitution, nay,

to sit down and write in his justification, and to labour in his behalf.

On the 13th, Napoleon left Lyons, and slept the night of the 14th at Maçon. M. de Lamartine, a native of this town, describes his cold reception by the inhabitants; but the sentiments of the population were not so important to him as the conduct of the Generals and the troops, which occupied the country in his right. This General was Ney, whose enthusiastic loyalty for the Bourbons had evaporated, on learning his old master's reception by the garrison of Grenoble and of Lyons. Personal attachment to Napoleon he had none; but the glory of the army, the cause of military France against Europe, of which, hopes of redemption seemed to rise, touched his heart, and shook the fidelity of Ney. He hesitated long: he consulted the Generals. Those of them who were not partizans, dissuaded flagrant defections as unworthy of the soldier; whilst the hot political partizans, like Bourrienne, hesitated as much as Ney himself. Ney sent an emissary to espy the enemy's force. Bertrand, Napoleon's Lieutenant, sent proclamations and eagles to shake the fidelity of Ney and his troops. "Flatter, but do not caress him," said Napoleon, "lest he think I fear him." But the sentiments of the soldiers were indubitably for Napoleon; and Ney, however his influence might have withstood their support, or, for a time, kept them aloof, could never have led them against the Emperor. Ney, therefore, resolved to follow the stream that he could not stem, and expressed his sentiments frankly, in his proclamation, which began—

"SOLDIERS!

"The cause of the Bourbons is lost for ever; the legitimate dynasty that France had adopted, reascends the

throne. To the Emperor belongs the right to reign over our country. Whether the Bourbon nobles remain amongst us, or depart from us, what matters it? The sacred cause of our liberty and independence will no longer suffer from their sad influence. They sought to degrade our military glory, but could not. That glory is the result of efforts too noble for us to forget. Soldiers, the times are past, when people can be governed by stifling their rights; liberty triumphs, and our Emperor will confirm it for ever. Let this noble cause be henceforth ours, and that of every Frenchman. The brave men whom I command, should become penetrated with this truth. Soldiers, I have often led you to victory; I will now conduct you to that immortal phalanx, which the Emperor Napoleon conducts to Paris, which will be there in a few days, when our hopes and happiness shall be for ever realized."

Ney then led his army to meet Napoleon, whom he came up with at Auxerre, but whom he felt greatly embarrassed to meet. He spoke of the necessity of justification—what need of any such thing? My affection towards him is what it ever was. Ney, when they met, expatiated on the absurd conduct of the Bourbons in making him kneel to the Duke of Berry to be made Chevalier of St. Louis. He did not tell how deeply the Duchess of Angoulême had offended his wife, in calling her by her Christian name. The Maréchale Ney was the daughter of Madame Auginère, one of the *femmes-de-chambre* of Marie Antoinette. The Duchess, from old recollection, made use of the Christian name in speaking to her. The Maréchale thought it was a *souvenir* of her ancient condition. Ney once by the Emperor's side, all hesitation amongst soldiers

vanished; and the troops mounted above Montereau to bar the road to Paris disappeared, or joined his ranks as he entered Fontainebleau.

There was a time when the whole merits of a cause were summed up in the person who represented it, and who inherited the right to represent it. There then existed no varied or complex motives, no ideas of popular rights, of a country's prospects or glory, independent of the dynasty which ruled it. The Bourbons, bred in times when such ideas and principles prevailed, believed still that such always existed, or should exist. They considered Ney and Soult, the lowly-born and never-educated, to be bound by the same laws and principles which inspired the Condés and Tremouilles. They would not persuade themselves that the world and its generation, its ideas of glory, duty, and honour had changed, and that they, unchanged, had fallen upon a world which they knew not.

There was one personage so fully imbued with these ideas, that she did not conceive it possible for brave and gallant soldiers to be other than loyal to their legitimate Prince, other than faithful to their solemn oath. The Duchess d'Angoulême was at Bordeaux when the first news of the usurper's landing was announced. This news excited contempt, not adherence. The National Guard assured the Princess of their loyalty. The troops showed no signs of being shaken or affected by the return of their old General. Some of the officers declared boldly against him. The fact was, that none believed in the success of this audacious enterprise. But when, contrary to the general expectation, that enterprise appeared ably conducted, and came crowned with success, a change came over the spirit of every one. Not only the line, but the

National Guard of Bordeaux, cooled in their loyalty. They had been sincere in their first expressions of it, but it then did not imply combat and sacrifice. The loyalty of that day did not go so far. General Clausel soon arrived on the banks of the river opposite to Bordeaux, with a few soldiers, and a tricolor flag. The troops sent against him joined him. He assured the Duchess he was master of Bordeaux, and could enter when he wished; and he, therefore, advised her to withdraw. She in turn summoned General Decaen, who commanded in the city, to march against Clausel. He pleaded the danger of issuing forth and leaving the garrison behind, which might pronounce for Napoleon. "The soldiers," observed the Duchess, "swore fidelity to our family but two days ago. Can they not be induced to remain true to their oath?" Impossible! The Duchess would not believe it impossible till she tried it. She ordered the several regiments to be drawn out in their respective quarters. She repaired thither, walked through their ranks, and addressed the soldiers:—

"Bordeaux is menaced. The National Guard are ready to defend it. Will you second them?" A solemn silence ensued. "May I count upon you?" she continued to ask. "As far as your own personal safety is concerned," said an officer. "It is not for my safety, but for the King's service you are asked to provide." "We cannot fight against our brothers." "Brothers! rebels!" exclaimed the Duchess, "you have soon forgotten your oaths. If there be any amongst you, who still remember them, let them show themselves." A few drew their swords, in tokens of adherence. The Duchess observed their paucity, and said, "I know at least on whom I can

count." After having tried each of the barracks with indomitable spirit, and being answered in the same way, the Duchess withdrew to embark, and abandoned Bordeaux to the Lieutenant of Napoleon. The Duke of Bourbon found as little encouragement or adherence in La Vendée, and was obliged to negociate in order to be allowed to embark.

Although the events of Bordeaux, with the courageous efforts of the Duchess d'Angoulême to defend it, as well as the expedition of the Duc d'Angoulême to the Rhone, occurred subsequently to the entrance of Napoleon into Paris, we still must relate these vain attempts of the Bourbons to defend their throne, ere taking up the narrative of Napoleon reseated there, and enumerating his equally vain efforts to rally more than the army around him, in his struggle against the powers of Europe.

The Duke of Angoulême's plan was certainly that best conceived, and most courageously executed, for resisting Napoleon. The road along the right bank of the Rhone, followed by Bonaparte on proceeding to Elba, had shown a population enraged against him. The cause of religion and the Bourbons counted numerous followers in the south. Whilst the Duchess d'Angoulême endeavoured to maintain herself in Bordeaux, M. de Vitrolles undertook to defend the loyal district of Toulouse, where he and his followers were subsequently captured. The Duc d'Angoulême hurried to take the command of the troops in the department of the Gard. He succeeded in doing so, and in displacing General Gills in that duty. On the 18th of March, the Duke made his entry into Marseilles, where he was enthusiastically received by the populace. Massena, who commanded there, and who was nowhere popular, was

obliged to withdraw to Toulon. The Duke was able to win three regiments from Massena, Marseilles at the same time furnishing him with a body of from three to five thousand Royalist volunteers. Finding himself thus at the head of 18,000 men, the Duke d'Angoulême might hope to operate a powerful diversion in the south; and had he marched with the whole body to Lyons, he might have caused some trouble to Napoleon. He, however, divided his army, and sent one half of it under General Loverdo to follow the Alpine road, east of the Rhone, which Napoleon had taken, and by it, to approach and attack Grenoble. With the rest, the Duke himself proposed to advance upon Lyons. He was emboldened thus to manœuvre with so small a force by the circumstance of Napoleon's having brought off with him, towards Paris, all the regiments in garrison, or in occupation of these departments. This only offered a stronger proof of the weakness of the Bourbon cause; for although the Imperialists at Grenoble had merely the National Guards, or armed inhabitants, to oppose to General Loverdo, these sufficed to arrest his march, to entice from him the two regiments under his command, and to send the volunteers of Marseilles back in discomfiture to their homes.

The Duke having made a better fight of it than Loverdo, reached Pont St. Esprit on the 27th, and entered Montelimart the following day. Here General Debelle, despising the Royalist army, which had in its ranks the 10th regiment of the line, as well as other regular troops, attacked them in Montelimart with a few hundred of National Guards: these, with the General, were defeated, and the circumstance gave such courage to the Duke, that he passed to the other side of the Rhone, and continued

his march upon Lyons. The Imperialists had rallied, collected a few regular troops, but by no means equal in number or discipline to the little Royalist army, and taken post to prevent the Royalists from passing the Drone. The Duc d'Angoulême, displaying the old courage of his family, as well as a skill and a presence of mind, not always his, led his troops in person to the attack of the bridge, carried it, and entered Valence. Here he hoped to be joined by the portion of his army which he had given to Loverdo, and of whose defeat he was ignorant. The successful advance of the Duke had alarmed the Imperialist officers, and whilst several divisions marched on all sides towards him, General Grouchy advanced against him five legions. The Prince soon found that further victory was impossible, and fell back to Pont St. Esprit, and was at last obliged to surrender, with the troops that remained.

The following letter was addressed by the Emperor on the occasion:—

"Count Grouchy,

"The King's Ordonnance of March the 6th, and the Convention signed at Vienna by his Ministers, would warrant me in treating the Duke of Angoulême as he would have treated me and my family; but true to the directions already given that the family of the Bourbons should have permission to withdraw from France, my wish is, that you cause the Duc d'Angoulême to be sent to Cette, and embarked there, and that he be protected from any bad treatment. You will capture any funds that have been taken from the Public Treasury, and demand of the Duke d'Angoulême that he procure the restitution of the diamonds of the Crown, which are the property of the nation.

"Napoleon."

Whilst these acts of the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême freed their family from the reproach of abandoning their lately-recovered throne without a blow, his political counsellors surrounded Louis XVIII., and assumed a hopeful aspect which belied their fears. It was their habit, and it appeared their duty, to play the courtier, and not offend Royalty with truth; all, therefore, treated Napoleon's enterprise, at first, as madness; and even, at last, as not irresistible. Marmont proposed to defend the Tuileries. The greater number deemed it more prudent for the King to withdraw to some frontier fortress, where the Constitutional standard might be kept aloft. What all thought, but what none said, was, that if in such a frontier defence was found impossible, escape at least would be easy. Lille presented these advantages, and Lille accordingly was chosen. On the 19th, therefore, preparations were made for departure. The King closed the session of the Chambers, preparatory to their reassembling in whatever provincial town the royal foot might find refuge and the Crown respect. The royal carriages were ordered for the night, and such troops as would obey orders, stationed to protect the royal retreat. There was not wanting a crowd of not mere courtiers, who assembled and thronged the palace court and staircase, to bid a painful and respectful adieu; some to the legitimate monarch, whom they loved with the loyalty of old times, others, and amongst them the most respectable of citizens and statesmen, who paid the same tribute to the monarch who carried off with him the hopes of Constitutional freedom. Louis, depressed by infirmity, and overwhelmed by events, could make but a hurried adieu. Post-horses carried him with rapidity to Lille, which he reached only to learn from the Duke of

Treviso that the garrison was not to be depended on, and that it was imperative for his Majesty to pass the frontier, and place himself beyond the reach of the French legions, anxious to replace the eagle once more upon their colours. Louis XVIII. retired to Ghent.

The fact of the King's departure soon spread abroad throughout the capital. Count Lavalette, Master of the Post-office under the Empire, repaired thither, as he asserts, for news; but all the clerks and authorities as eagerly transferred their obedience to him as the soldiers did to Napoleon. Even Count Ferrand, the royal post-master, yielded his place and authority, and besought of his self-appointed successor a pass, in due form, to enable him to withdraw in safety. Lavalette instantly despatched a courier to Fontainebleau, to the Emperor, with tidings that the capital was evacuated—the throne vacant.

Meantime, the nineteen of Bonaparte's officers placed upon half-pay, and whom Soult had in vain endeavoured to remove from Paris, mustered at St. Denis. They had seen the royal carriage pass in the night, and the remains of the Royalist corps follow Louis XVIII.'s route towards the north. They mustered, in consequence, to march upon the Tuileries. A certain number of troops of the line, or rather of artillery, joined them, and behind these a mob, eager for novelty and triumph. On their way to Paris they encountered General Excelmans, who was proceeding to St. Denis to provoke the very movement that he met. He became its chief, and entered Paris at its head.

All the afternoon a crowd had collected before the gates and grating of the Tuileries, behind which the National Guards stood sentinel, more anxious to prevent turmoil and pillage than to engage in civil combat. They refused the

mob entrance, and the people replied by threats, of "Down with the Bourbons—Long live the Emperor!"

At length, the arrival of Excelmans, his troops, and his cannon, put an end to the resistance. The National Guard, receding, gave up the Tuileries to a known General officer. The half-pay officers instantly took possession of the palace, its guard-houses, and its courts, hoisting the tri-color on the central dome in lieu of the white flag.

At a later hour the ladies attached to the Imperial Court arrived, took possession of the apartments which the Royal Family had just vacated, and began to prepare them for the Emperor. The carpet of the large saloon was covered with white lilies; a female foot, applied to one of these, told that it was only stitched on. In a trice scissors were set to work, the lilies unstitched, and the Imperial bees, which they had covered, re-appearing, showed the old Imperial carpet, which Bourbon economy or prescience had not removed.

It was nine o'clock in the evening of the 20th of March ere Napoleon reached Paris, retarded by the cannon that flashed to greet him. In order to reach the Tuileries he was obliged to follow the interior Boulevards. No sooner were the wheels heard under the arch of the Carrousel than the crowd of his partisans rushed to meet him, and carried him off in their arms. The crowd of women from above, stopping the influx of men from below, forced the latter to place the Emperor on his feet, and he walked up, pale, but smiling, into those halls, the scenes, alternately, of princely splendour and of princely ruin,*

* Pour lui, il montait lentement, les yeux fermés, les mains etendues en avant, comme un aveugle, et n'exprimant son bonheur que par sa sourire.—*Mémoires de Cte. Lavalette.*

CHAPTER VI.

WEAKNESS OF THE BOURBONS—PERPLEXITY IN THE GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE—NAPOLEON FORMS A MINISTRY—CAMBACÈRÉS—FOUCHÉ—CARNOT—MOLÉ—COMMUNICATIONS WITH LAFAYETTE—OVERTURES TO BENJAMIN CONSTANT—ENROLMENT OF THE FÉDÉRÉS—ASSEMBLY OF THE CHAMP DE MAI—PROMULGATION OF A CONSTITUTION—INTELLIGENCE OF NAPOLEON'S INVASION REACHES VIENNA—MANIFESTO OF THE ALLIED POWERS—MILITARY OPERATIONS—MARSHAL NEY'S ATTACK ON QUATRE BRAS—BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

THE partisans of the Bourbons have thought it necessary to the honour of the dynasty to prove that their overthrow in 1814 was the result of a conspiracy. The vanity of such an assertion is palpable. None certainly were more alarmed and taken by surprise at the Emperor's landing than his old ministers and friends, although some of them had conveyed to him information of the unpopularity of the Bourbons and the possibility of his own resuscitation. The army was his; at least all of it which had seen him merely in the field of battle and known him by his exploits. The Generals, who had approached his person, penetrated his motives, and appreciated his character, did not love him. There was scarcely one who would not have preferred the Bourbons for masters, had

the Bourbons treated them fairly, or had they shown the power to maintain their ground. But the private soldier as well as the officer, up to the grade of Colonel, admired Napoleon, identified his name and glory with those of France. Along with the soldiers went the sympathies of the peasant classes, from which they sprung and unto which the greater number of them returned.* In some few parts of France, the influence of priests, who resented Napoleon's outrage upon the Pope of Rome, and not conciliated by the poverty and dependence to which he consigned the lower clergy, might divert a few flocks and districts from attachment to the Emperor; and the sentiments of women, lamenting for their children, might have procured in 1814 to make even some peasants raise their hands against the Emperor. But even that cause of indifference or unpopularity had disappeared before the deep sense of national humiliation, the disturbance of individual fortunes, the faults and follies of the Royalist party, and the absence as yet of that return of prosperity which it requires more than a few months of peace to develop. Soldiers and peasants were Bonapartists as they are still, so deeply does military glory engrave itself upon the simple and popular minds. This sentiment constituted the conspiracy of 1815, against which the educated class protested, and to which the civic class remained indifferent, with the exception of manufacturers, where they existed. In a country, however, where there is a large army, recruited from the agricultural population, and maintaining sympathy and connexion with them, the opinion or the allegiance which pervades this the most

* "Je ne suis pas, seulement, comme on l'a dit, l'Empereur des soldats, je suis celui des paysans, des plébéiens de la France."—*Napoleon to B. Constant.*

numerous class of the country must prevail, if appealed to frankly or managed adroitly.

Yet, although it was on these classes, which very generally and emphatically he styled the people, on whom Napoleon could alone hope to lean and to find support, he was so shaken and dispirited by the force of his recent fall, that he attributed it at first to his neglect of the middle and educated classes, to his want of sympathy and attention to their desires and their interests. His idea was, that the war he was about to wage, would prove a protracted one, and would require the support of the educated, the wealthy, and the citizen classes to maintain it—of those classes whose lukewarmness had proved fatal to him, he thought, in 1814. It was as difficult for Napoleon, with his precedents, his character, and the nature of his powers, to conciliate the professional and educated men, as it was for the Bourbons to inspire the people and their kindred soldiers with respect or allegiance towards them. And this has been the perplexity of all governments in France and the stumbling-block of all parties and all statesmen, that the several classes of that country are so deeply divided, that the favourite and the representative of one cannot win the adherence or even provide for the interests of the other. At such an assertion as this, one is apt to exclaim how should such difference exist in a country, over which revolution has passed its scythe, cutting down the great and the rich to a level with the poor and the small, not merely destroying but proscribing inequality, and making of the whole people a democracy ignorant of hereditary rights or privileges? But, unfortunately, where there are no distinctions of birth, or position, or education, the remaining and inera-

dicable distinction of rich and poor, employer and employed, of the luxurious and the destitute, is more glaringly contrasted and more sensibly perceived. Distinction of birth forms the gold lace which covers the seam. To tear this off is but to lay bare that seam. Not only also does distinction of birth cover difference of fortune in long-settled and undisturbed countries, but along with both exists the dependence of one class upon another, the poor upon the rich, with scope for kindness and benefits on one side, gratitude and resignation on the other. But in France the Revolution had not destroyed the poverty of the lower class, it had merely rendered them independent in their poverty, holding their bit of land and starving on it, or at least rudely pinched. The peasant, depending on no one, sees a class above him, to which he owes nought, from which he expects nought, and of which he feels nothing but jealousy. Then the deep schism between the peasant and the bourgeois in France, with a mutual repugnance of sentiments and interests, quite as great as that old one between noble and ignoble.

The consequence is, that the educated and upper classes in France have long lost all hold and influence over the lower and the uneducated, and that a government based on the interests, ideas, or predilections of the one, is only the more unacceptable and repugnant to the other The Bourbons of the Restoration came in merely with the influence of the small remnant of men of birth and high station. Napoleon had for him the people, attached to military ideas of greatness and glory. The middle class wavered between, disliked and was weary of the one, was anxious to try yet could scarcely consent to respect the other. It was evident that there was no large portion of the popula-

tion, able or willing to resist the army,—to interfere with or impede the new trial of strength and efforts at retrieval which it was about to make under its old chief. The cause and the hopes of Napoleon lay solely on the success of this army; and all his efforts to rival the Bourbons in the establishment of liberty and in the conciliation of the educated and commercial classes, were merely time and labour thrown away. For genuine civic liberty and for the participation of the nation in its own government, neither Bonaparte or the Bourbons cared. The greater part of the French educated and civic public knew this, and were therefore as indifferent as men could be to a struggle, in which national pride was, notwithstanding these political differences, deeply implicated.

After an hour given to the refreshment of the bath, not his repose, Napoleon summoned his old councillors and servitors in order to compose a Ministry. The first person whom he spoke to on this subject appears to have been Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, who was on the staircase of the Tuileries to meet his arrival, Napoleon wishing him to resume the post of Minister of Foreign affairs. The negociator of Chatillon had no wish to be again the idle intermediary between the Emperor and his avowed foes. To be a Minister of Foreign Affairs in the face of Europe, which refused to negociate, appeared to him a mockery. Caulaincourt knew too much to assume the office. It was offered to Molé, who declined it on the plea that he knew too little. Napoleon was obliged to force it upon the Duke of Vicenza. Cambacérés, the old Arch-chancellor, and chief Councillor of the Emperor for domestic concerns, was not amongst those who hastened to meet him He came when sum-

moned, but timid and loving his ease, he showed no inclination to compromise himself further by the resumption of office. When Napoleon more fully explained his views to Cambacérés and Molé, he found them both still more reluctant to take any prominent position. Napoleon's first idea was to appeal, not to the Constitutionalists, who had all shown preference for the Bourbons, but to the old Revolutionists and Republicans whom he considered the liberal party. He announced his intention of employing Carnot, and even using Fouché as a link and an instrument to rout the old party of the Revolution.

Cambacérés and Molé, especially the latter, considered such policy as mistaken. The parties and the ideas of 1792 they considered dangerous and defunct, as bringing no strength, yet opening the door for disorder. Molé carried his objection so far, that when the Council of State, acting upon Napoleon's suggestions, re-exhumed the old phraseology of 1792, and proclaimed the sovereignty of the people, he refused to sign it. Molé, however, took an inferior Ministry, that of Roads and Bridges, under which Public Works were designated. When Cambacérés consented to act as Minister of Justice, the Home Office was given to Carnot, who was touched by the political repentance and Republican language of the Emperor. And Napoleon's ideas were now consonant to those of Fouché, whom the distracted Government of the Restoration had sent to consult by one embassy and to arrest by another, and who now sallied to the Emperor with every outward demonstration of zeal and attachment.

His Ministry formed, a day was appointed for the great officers and bodies of the State to repair to the Tuileries,

and pay the usual homage of an address. It was on this occasion, that the Council of State spoke in the language which displeased Molé, and which was couched in that genuine Bonaparte style, which would ally the extreme of popular and democratic rights with that of Imperial dictatorship, avoiding and contemning those principles of constitutional monarchy, so odious as borrowed from England, and as adopted by the Bourbons.

"The Emperor," said the official orator of the State Council, "on reascending that throne to which he was raised by the people, restores the people to the same rights. He does but recall to execution the decrees of representative assemblies sanctioned by the nation. He returns to reign by that sole principle of legitimacy which France has recognized and consecrated within the last twenty-five years, and to which all the authorities were bound by oaths, from which nothing but the will of the people could free them. The Emperor is again called to guarantee by institutions all liberal principle, individual liberty, equality of rights, the freedom of the press, and no censorship, liberty of worship, vote of laws and contributions by representatives of the nation legally chosen, immutability of national property, independence of judges, responsibility of ministers. The better to secure the rights of the people and the monarch, the national institutions to be revived in the Great Assembly of Representatives announced by the Emperor. Till then the Emperor to exercise that power which the will of the nation gave him, which no one had the right to deprive him of, nor even had he the right to abdicate."

Napoleon's reply to this address developed his idea of legitimacy. "Princes," said he, "are the first citizens

of the State. Their authority is greater or less, as the interests of the nation they govern demand it. Sovereignty itself is hereditary, so far as the public interest requires. Beyond this principle, I acknowledge no legitimacy. I have renounced the idea of the Great Empire, of which during fifteen years I laid the foundation. Henceforth the happiness and consideration of the French Empire shall be my only thought."

These sentiments were followed by decrees, abolishing the censorship, decreeing the liberty of the press, allowing free election to municipalities. But with such ministers as Fouché to execute them, such concessions, however planned in word, were easily neutralized in practice, as Lafayette complained. However, the thing paramount was, the Representative Assembly promised, and the Constitution which was to be proposed to it. On this important subject, Napoleon consulted for the first month of his intercalary reign with himself, and his Republican allies, Carnot and Fouché. In that time schemes of all kinds were formed, with the view of uniting a Republic with an Empire.

Finding neither sense nor consistency in any of these schemes, Napoleon resolved to recur to the Constitutional Monarchists, whom he had at first despised. In the middle of April he summoned to him Benjamin Constant, and at the same time opened communications with Lafayette, through his brother Joseph and General Dumas. Constant came at the Emperor's call, and was fascinated by the humility, the sincerity, real or apparent, as well as the kindness of the man whom he had so lately denounced.

"The nation," said Napoleon to Benjamin Constant, "has reposed twelve years from all political agitation, and

it is now a year since it has rested from war. This double repose has created a craving for activity. It wants, or thinks it wants, a public tribune and assemblies. Such was not always its desire. It flung itself at my feet when I attained the Government. You may remember, you who tried opposition. Where was your power, your support? Nowhere. I took less authority than I was besought to take. To-day everything is changed. A weak government, in opposition to the national interests, has given to these interests the habit of standing on the defensive and attacking the Government. The taste for constitutions, debates, and harangues, has returned. It is after all but a minority that wishes for such things—mind I say so. The people, or the multitude, desire but me. You might have seen them rushing from all sides, from the very tops of mountains, calling, seeking, saluting me. I achieved no conquest, returning from Cannes I merely resumed the Government. I am not only the Emperor of the soldier, but of the peasants and plebeians of France. Thus after all that has passed, the people have returned to me. There is sympathy between us. But I have none with the privileged classes. The old noblesse took service under me, and crowded my antechamber. There is not a place which they did not demand, solicit, and accept. I have had Montmorencies, and Noailles, and Rohans. But the noblesse was a horse, which however well trained, showed impatience under me. Not so the people. Their fibre is mine. Look at conscripts. I never flattered them; on the contrary, treated them rudely and harshly. They cheered and worshipped me not the less. They look to me to save them from the nobles, who have manœuvred with such wisdom during the last ten months, that on a

word or sign of mine, they would be massacred in every province. But I do not want to be king of a *Jacquerie*. If there are means of governing by a constitution, let us try it. I aimed at the empire of the world, and, in order to insure it, power without control was necessary to me. To govern France alone, a constitution may do better. I aimed at the empire of the world, and who in my place would not have aimed at it? The world invited me to rule it. Sovereigns and subjects threw themselves beneath my sceptre. I rarely found resistance in France; but I encountered more of it from a few obscure French, than from all the kings, who were so proud the other day in getting rid of a king like me, of popular growth. Let us now see what is possible. Bring me your ideas. Public discussion, free elections, responsible ministers, freedom of the press. I am for all these; for the liberty of the press, especially. Stifling the press is absurd. I am a man of the people, and if the people want liberty I give it to them. I have recognized their sovereignty, I must listen to their wishes, nay, to their caprice. I never wished to oppress them for my pleasure. I had great designs. Fate has condemned them. I am no longer a conqueror, can no longer be one. I know what is possible, and what is not. I have but the mission to raise up France from its fall, and give it the government that is suitable. I do not hate liberty: I merely set it aside when it obstructed my path. But I comprehended it, for I was reared in the thoughts of it. My work of fifteen years has been destroyed, and cannot be recommenced. All I want is peace, and that is only to be obtained by victories. I do not want to give you false hopes about negotiations: there are none. I foresee a difficult struggle, a long war. To sustain it I

require the support of the nation. In return the nation will ask of me its liberty. It shall have it. The position is new. I demand but to be enlightened. I grow old, one is not at forty-five what one is at thirty. The tranquillity of a constitutional king may suit me. It will be best at all events for my son."

Having thus disburdened and explained himself, Napoleon flung into Constant's hands the numerous schemes and drafts of a constitution with which the Republicans had furnished him. Some were modelled after the government of Vienna, with its Inquisitions of State; others established Roman freedom, with the Roman mode of correcting it, censors to eliminate the few, a dictator from time to time to terrify the many. Constant set to work with his ideas of Constitutional Monarchy, and brought his sketch to the Emperor. The latter objected less to the principles laid down, or to the liberties conceded, than to the form adopted. Constant proposed blotting out all the first legislation, the civic acts and history of the Empire, the great man exclaimed—

"That's not what I want! You shear off all my past, and I would preserve it. What has become of my eleven years of reign. Surely I have a right to them, and Europe cannot but remember them. We must attach the new constitution to the old. It will thus have the sanction of many years of glory and success."

After all the differences between Napoleon and Benjamin Constant, and even between Napoleon and Lafayette, were not respecting the fundamental parts, the true basis of Constitutional Government, but about different parts of the superstructure. The two vital principles of Constitutional Government are, first, a Chamber of Representatives, freely

and directly elected; secondly, the right of proposing, initiating, and amending, as well as discussing laws. These two principles were certainly vitiated and destroyed in the old Imperial Constitution, of which the ruling idea was, the formation of a list of notables, the people in the provinces electing a certain number of the wealthiest and most influential amongst them to form the assembly of the department, and these again choosing from amongst them notables thought worthy of place, whether as functionaries or representatives. The select body of men thus formed and permanent, became, of course, the objects of Government patronage, so that the character or the trace of a popular representation or representative was lost. The members of an assembly thus constituted had no power of either proposing or amending laws. It was the mockery of Constitutional Government.

But Louis XVIII. had placed his foot in precisely the same traces. His charter was just as bad, worse indeed, for it left the formation of the electoral colleges to future decrees and regulations. So that, in truth, the Constitutionalists upholding the Bourbons against the Bonapartes, did so upon a mere delusion, the octroyed Charter of the one being a tyranny quite as close and convenient, as the *Senatus consulta* of the other. The only difference lay in the Bourbons being weak and dependent on civilians, whilst the Bonapartes had soldiers to conduct the policy of their Government; but the means and machinery for being tyrants were equally at the disposal of both. The great dispute between Napoleon and Constant was not the freedom of election, or the initiative power of the deputies, but whether Government should have the right to confiscate the property of pretenders to the Crown.

Yet this claim of confiscation indifferent to the mass of the people, and indeed to all save professional politicians, (who wished to preserve to themselves the liberty of changing masters and transferring allegiance, without any risk of property and advantages), this was the great matter on which Constant insisted, to the exclusion or oblivion of things a thousand times more important.

One was prepared for disputes between the Emperor and his constitutional advisers on the subject of freedom of election, lowness of franchise, power of the deputies, freedom of the press, liberty of the subject. But no: Napoleon yielded everything of this kind that was demanded of him. But when he was told that he must abolish the law of confiscation, and allow the Bourbons and their partizans to receive the revenue of any property they might possess, in order to make use of these against him—when the Council of State insisted upon this, the perfect immunity of disaffection and premium on permanent rebellion, so convenient to a nation, which would provide for periodical or frequent changes of dynasty,—his spirit rebelled, and he saw in such concessions a weakness and a *bonhommie* as injurious to the manly character of the Sovereign, as hurtful to his interests and obstructive of his policy.

"That is not my road," he exclaimed. "You weaken and fetter me. France would not recognize me under such traits. What it looks for is the old arm of the Emperor, that arm which broke the resistance of Europe. Don't talk to me of goodness, of abstract justice, natural rights. The first law is necessity, the first justice is the public safety. You want me to permit men, whom I have loaded with benefits and fortune, to use that fortune in

conspiring against me abroad. That is impossible and absurd. Every Frenchman, every patriot, every soldier would have a right to ask me for an account of that wealth which I allowed to go to their enemies and mine abroad. When peace comes, it may be all very well. Each time has its own penalty, each circumstance its law, and every man has his nature. Mine is not that of an angel. I tell you, gentlemen, this old arm of the Emperor must make itself be seen and felt."

But although Constant and his other Councillors of State failed in persuading Napoleon to sanction in his new Charter the principle of perfect impunity and stability to the property even of those who were conspiring against him, their recommendations of mercy, and the insisting that no blood should be spilled, had their full effect. The Emperor allowed the Duke d'Angoulême to escape. Respecting M. de Vitrolles, who had been captured at Toulouse, and whom Napoleon accused of suborning plots against his life, he seemed not so decided. He talked of bringing him to trial; but on a word of serious remonstrance from Constant, he at once abandoned the idea.

The peerage was another subject of difference between the Emperor and the Constitutionalists. All the old revolutionary hatred of a feudal noblesse had revived in the mind of Napoleon. The objection wanted neither sense or force.

"The peerage," exclaimed he, "is quite out of harmony with the present state of men's minds. It will hurt the pride of the army, disappoint the expectations of the republicans, make enemies of thousands of individual pretensions. Where am I to find the elements of an aristocracy? Old fortunes are antagonistic to me, new fortunes are

ashamed of me. Five or six illustrious names are not enough. Without reminiscences, historic lustre, or great wealth, on what would my aristocracy be founded? That of England is quite different. Raised above the people, it was never antagonistic to the people. Its nobles gave liberty to the English; and their grandeur has grown with the greatness of the Constitution. But for thirty years to come, what would my mushroom peers be, but soldiers or chamberlains? The people would behold in my House of Peers nothing beyond a camp or an antechamber."

Notwithstanding these objections, the Emperor yielded to his constitutional advisers the establishment of a peerage more feudal and complete than that founded by the Bourbon Charter. It admitted peerages for life, whereas Napoleon's act declared all to be hereditary. What Constant affects to be most offended at was the last article, added, he thinks, by Napoleon himself, declaring that in delegating its power, the French people excluded certain propositions as impossible, such as the re-establishment of the Bourbons, or of any Prince of that family, even should the imperial dynasty become extinct. It also forbade the restoration of the feudal noblesse and its privileges, that of tithes or of any dominant church, as also any proposal for considering the sale of national property under the Revolution as other than irrevocable.

The promulgation of this scheme of a Constitution, or, as it was called, Additional Act to the Constitution of the Empire, was it seems coldly received. The public saw war in the foreground, with all kinds of exhortations and promises to tempt them to engage heartily in it. During that war, and until the meeting of the Chambers, the Emperor was to be absolute. And the French had learned

even from the Bourbons to disbelieve in the realization of a Representative Chamber freely and truly elected. People therefore did not take the trouble to talk of the many boons, and the real liberties promised in the Additional Act. Freedom of press, of person; the giving no levies of men or of money, but in consequence of a Parliamentary vote; the subjection of the two hundred thousand employés of the State to the common law, instead of their being only amenable to the Council of State; all these, never given nor accomplished under the reign of Louis Philippe, though promised by the Additional Act of Napoleon, did not secure for the latter zealous adherence or popularity. Benjamin Constant sought to console the Emperor for this ineradicable distrust of the middle and civic class towards him, and advised him to order the election of the future Representative Assembly, as the best way to overcome this mistrust.

Napoleon did so; but whilst gratifying the party of Constitutional Monarchists in this, he acted more according to his own views in ordering that the Additional Act or new Constitution should be submitted to the ordeal of universal suffrage, and that all Frenchmen should record their votes for or against it. These votes were to be despatched from all the provinces to Paris, and solemnly opened and ascertained in the Assembly of the Champ de Mai. This meeting, originally intended for the first of that month, did not take place till the 1st of June. It was to consist of the members of all the electoral colleges of the Empire, and at the same time of deputations from all the military and naval corps. This assemblage of the chief civilians of the provinces, who were of course for the most part functionaries, and at the same time the deputa-

tion of field officers, was at once an imitation of the popular institutions of Charlemagne, and a kind of counterpoise to the Chamber of Representatives and the Constitutional Monarchists.

Napoleon, who at that moment had need of all parties, could give himself up frankly and fully to none. In the article and liberties of the Additional Act, and the summoning of Chambers to carry it out, he certainly made very great concessions to the Constitutionalists, greater than ever the Bourbons made before or since. The Constitutionalists, with the exception of Constant, received such advances without either gratitude or enthusiasm. And Napoleon then fell back on the Republicans, representing that the Champ de Mai, and the vote of the Constitution by universal suffrage, were in their ideas. Fouché exerted his utmost to lure Napoleon in this direction, as did also his brother Lucien, who made his way to Paris and gave himself heart and soul to the cause of the Emperor. Whilst Constant besought Napoleon to win the adherence of the middle classes, Fouché represented that there was no real force save in the army and the people, and by the people he meant the working class, those of the field and more especially those of the metropolitan suburbs. It was these classes, whose energy had saved France and the Republic in the early days of the Revolution, and were alone capable of making great efforts and great sacrifices now. In obedience to this view, Fouché instituted enrolments of volunteers in the suburbs; and troops of these, under the old revolutionary name of Fédérés, marched to the Tuileries to be reviewed by Napoleon. He would allow no money for the purpose, and therefore these men came before him in rags and dirt,

armed with pikes, and speaking the revolutionary jargon which prevailed in those popular haunts. But with all this they spoke the generous, straightforward, enthusiastic feeling of the lower orders.

"We hail your return," they said to Napoleon, "because you are the man of the nation, the defender of our country. Why did we not get arms, when foreign kings, summoned hither by treason, appeared under the walls of Paris? We could have lent our aid to the citizens of the National Guard, and enabled them to offer effectual resistance. We then called upon you: you were absent, and we shed tears of rage to see our hands without weapons and useless. We have many of us been your soldiers and have bled for our country. Give us arms as men, and we shall know how to use them, not on behalf of any party, but for the common defence."

Napoleon thanked the Fédérés of the faubourgs, but refused to supply them with arms. He had an old horror of mobs, which "can make revolutions," he said, "but can never achieve conquests." He sympathised far more with Molé, who had a horror of all that savoured of the old Republic, than with Carnot or Fouché, who represented that nothing but revolutionary means, measures, and ideas could save him.

In the midst of these various and conflicting efforts to create confidence and muster strength, to enlist and make use of large and influential classes in the service of the Emperor, took place the ceremony of the Champ de Mai. It was anything but republican in aspect. It would have suited the stern necessity of the times, as being military; but the ceremony and costumes were of imperial pretensions. The Emperor appeared in a purple cloak lined with

ermine, his brothers in white satin, as ill-becoming to their features as their position. One dignitary in orange silk, others with colours equally varied and resplendent, sate near the altar, at which a solemn mass inaugurated the ceremony. The task of the day was to ascertain the number of votes for or against the constitution. This would have required the labour of hours, and of many people. But Champollion Figeac, * charged with the office, made hasty work of it. Of 200,000 votes, not more than 3,000 were given in the negative. But how small a fraction of the population was denoted by the number of voters!

M. Dubois D'Angers then, in the name of the electors, addressed the Emperor on the subject of the new contract concluded between prince and people, in the face of the menacing coalition of Europe, which all were determined to resist. Napoleon replied, that as Emperor, Consul, or soldier, he held everything of the people, and never had a thought but of it. His desire was peace, but peace with those who had taken Belgium from France, and menaced to partition out Alsace and Lorraine, was impossible. A nation must lose everything with its independence. Notwithstanding all its pomp the religious and civil portion of the ceremony was cold. But when Napoleon, flinging off his ermine robe, appeared in uniform before his soldiers, about to distribute once more the imperial eagles—when, in a few words, he said he was about to re-confide to them tne eagles, which they were to swear to defend and rally to, the military oath, which the troops sent back by acclamation, had in it a vigour and an enthusiasm which civilian harangues could not assume. The Emperor addressed a

* Capefigue relates that Champollio told him this.

few spirited words to each regiment. The imperial guard he asked to die, rather than permit foreigners to give the law to France. The martial response, given by these twenty thousand throats at one instant, never died from the memory of those who witnessed the scene, and who more than once afterwards compared it to the salutation of the Roman gladiators in the Circus. "*Cæsar, morituri te salutant.*"

A week afterwards the Emperor presided at another ceremony, the opening of the Chamber. In the preparatory meeting of the assembly and its election of President, there was manifest a strong spirit of independence, and jealousy of imperial absolutism. Napoleon scarcely knew whether he met friends or foes; and it was manifest, says Lafayette, from the strong contractions of the muscles of his face, that he experienced great contrariety. Lafayette attributed this to an imperial dislike of representative assemblies of any kind. But on the eve of marching to meet his enemies in the field, and seeing before him an assembly of deputies, much more prepared to take advantage of any disaster that might befal him, than aid him sincerely in the struggle he was about to commence, it is not to be wondered at if the Chamber inspired Napoleon with misgivings. His attitude and speech were nevertheless, by Lafayette's admission, marked with nobleness, and Emperor and Chamber parted with mutual content.

The news of Napoleon's having sailed from Elba reached the British embassy, at Vienna from Florence, on the 7th, in the midst of the negotiation with the King of Saxony, who had come to Presburg. It had the effect of hurrying and concluding those negotiations. The belief was, that he had gone to join Murat, and that their aim

was to drive the Austrians from Italy ere they entered France. A few days later, on the 11th, when the world of diplomacy was assembled at a ball given by the Princess Metternich, the whole truth of Bonaparte's daring and Bourbon weakness burst upon the members of Congress. The conquests of armies for several campaigns, the labours of statesmanship and diplomacy for so long a time, were shivered like glass. It was a deep humiliation for the wisdom congregated at Vienna. The first impulse of some was to burst out laughing at their own impotence and want of foresight. But this was a dangerous sentiment, were it to become general. Not only were the great powers and their great men menaced with being the laughing-stock of Europe, but the spoilers were threatened with the chance of losing their prey. Prussia had but just swallowed half Saxony, and extended its dominions along the Rhine. Austria had appropriated Venice, and pushed her authority to Bregentz and to the Ticino. The two powers had allowed Russia to absorb and extend the Polish Grand Duchy as the price of their own aggrandizement. England had put together a new kingdom, which was to preserve the Scheldt from France, and was to complete the barrier of North Europe against that ambitious power. All these spoils became insecure, and this political edifice tottering, by the sole fact of the advent of Napoleon. To oppose him at once by their united power was the plain dictate of interest and pride. On that point there could have been no hesitation. But on whose behalf, or for whose profit, should they again undertake the weighty and expensive work of reconquering France?

The Emperor Alexander was supremely disgusted with the Bourbons, who had contemned his counsels, and dis-

owned a portion at least of the debt of gratitude due to Russia. His friend and companion at Vienna had been Eugene de Beauharnais. His first exclamation, on learning the flight of the Bourbons, was, that he had foreseen, and knew "that it could not last." Lord Castlereagh had for some time left Vienna, and been replaced by the Duke of Wellington, who was far from being a warm admirer of the Bourbons; but when, in the first conversation of sovereigns and statesmen after the catastrophe, the Bourbons had been set aside as worthless, and their champion, Talleyrand, reduced, as one of them testifies, from the extreme of insolence to the lowest grade of humility, the thought which came to animate the German Powers shocked and alarmed the English Plenipotentiaries and the Russian Autocrat. The military statesmen of Germany, especially of Prussia, talked of nothing less than dividing France amongst them, shearing it of Alsace and Lorraine, and the conquests of Louis XIV., and treating that country in the same way that Napoleon had treated Germany. This neither suited the views of England nor Russia, both of which Powers, England, at least, naturally desired to see a strong and independent France as well as a strong and independent Germany Besides these motives was another: Louis XVIII. and his brothers set aside, the next claimant was the son of Napoleon, with his mother, a daughter of Austria, for Regent; for to impose either the Duke of Orleans or Eugene Beauharnais upon the French, could neither of them unite parties, either in France or out of it, in their favour. To replace France under Austrian influence would not have suited Alexander. Thus, after the first disgust towards the Bourbons had evaporated in the minds of the influential Sovereigns and Ministers, all recurred to the plan upon

which they could alone agree, the re-establishment of Louis XVIII.

Prince Talleyrand was wont to give himself the credit of having brought about this unanimous resolution. M. de Lamartine, from the same source, gives minute and interesting details of the efforts of the Prince during that memorable week. He represents Alexander as, at first, declaring himself sick of war, and determined never to draw sword again for the Bourbons. The reasons which Talleyrand adduced, either to exculpate the Bourbons or represent them as the sole rulers which could preserve France the tranquil ally of Europe, are given, the finesse of Talleyrand being clothed with the eloquence of Lamartine. Events have disproved the truth of many of these arguments, and notably of that which represented the principle of legitimacy as the only solid and durable foundation of government. Prince Talleyrand's representations had, no doubt, a certain effect. His great ability is not to be questioned; but the Bourbon cause triumphed in the minds of the members of Congress, much as the cause of dynastic candidates for sovereignty generally prevail, in consequence of there being really no substitute or competitor whose elevation would not be fraught with far more inconvenience, and betray far more weaknesses.*

Much time was not taken for deliberation. The news of

* "I have frequently told your Highness," writes Wellington to Metternich, on the 20th of May, "that the only chance of peace for Europe consists in the establishment in France of the legitimate Bourbons. The establishment of any other Government, whether in the person of ——, or in a Regency in the name of young Napoleon, or in any other individual, or in a Republic, must lead to the maintenance of large military establishments, to the ruin of all the Governments of Europe, till it shall suit the convenience of the French to commence a contest which can be directed only against you or others for whom we are interested."

Napoleon's success only reached Vienna on the 11th, and on the 13th the Allied Powers published the following Manifesto, not merely denouncing war to Bonaparte, but considering Louis XVIII. as the rightful King of France, in whose support warlike operations were to be undertaken:—

"The Powers which signed the Treaty of Paris, reassembled in Congress at Vienna, informed of the evasion of Napoleon Bonaparte, and of his armed entry into France, owe to their own dignity, as well as to the interests of social order, a solemn declaration of their sentiments. In thus breaking the Convention, which fixed him in Elba, Bonaparte has destroyed the sole legal title to which his existence is attached. By reappearing in France, with projects of trouble and overthrow, he has deprived himself of the protection of law, and has rendered manifest in the face of the universe that truce or peace with him is impossible. The Powers, therefore, declare that Napoleon Bonaparte has put himself out of the pale of civil and social relations, and that, as an enemy and perturbator of the peace of the world, he is handed over to public vengeance. The Powers declare that they will employ all means, and unite their efforts to guarantee Europe from an attempt which threatens to fling nations back into the disorder and misfortune of revolution. And though persuaded that all France, rallying round their legitimate Sovereign, will soon annihilate this aim of criminal and powerless insanity, the Sovereigns of Europe, animated by the same principles and sentiments, declare, that if, against all probability, real danger should arise, they shall be prepared to afford to the King of France and the French nation, as well as to any Government attached, necessary succours, as soon as they

are demanded, for re-establishing public tranquillity, and putting down those who endanger it."

Whatever hesitation Austria might have had in repudiating Napoleon, it was removed by the warlike movements of Murat, who, in the middle of March, commenced his operations for freeing the north of Italy from Austrian troops. It is impossible not to consider such movements as concerted with Napoleon, whose sister, Pauline, had sailed from Elba to Naples. Military and financial conventions, therefore, were quickly added at Vienna to political ones. Austria stipulated to place 350,000 men under Marshal Schwarzenberg, to operate on the east of France. England and Prussia were to collect a combined army of 250,000 men in Belgium, under the command of Wellington and Blucher. The Emperor of Russia was to bring 200,000 Russians into the field; whilst England was, moreover, to furnish a subsidy of five millions sterling, to be divided equally between the three Powers.

Napoleon, in the meantime, made every effort to open negotiations with the European Powers. Baron Vincent took charge of a letter to Marie Louise, which her father intercepted. Emissary after emissary was sent to Vienna; Metternich either imprisoned or dismissed them. Montrond, a friend of Talleyrand's, penetrated to him. All that Prince said, was to advise him to stay where he was, and "not mistake fortune as the Emperor had mistaken the hour." Napoleon's relative, Hortense, wrote to Alexander. The latter declared there could be neither truce nor peace with Napoleon. He wrote an autograph letter to the Sovereign; it could not reach. All Caulaincourt's couriers and envoys were arrested and sent back. France was surrounded by a circle of enemies, closing gradually upon it

in mute determination to exchange nothing but blows with Bonaparte. Fouché alone succeeded in opening communications with Vienna, where it was hoped that subtle agent might be induced to betray his master. Napoleon discovered the intrigue: one of the events which troubled and distracted his mind from what should have been its sole care and effort, his military defence. Fouché, who could never trust his own fortune, or that of his country, to one scheme or to one party, was trying to get Austria to favour a scheme of Regency during the minority of the King of Rome. The Austrian envoys did not say nay to this idea, and M. Fleury de Chaboulon, employed on this expedition, asserts that the Sovereigns were ready to accept Napoleon himself as regent for his son. The absurdity and the aimlessness of the proposal cast a doubt on the truth, or the seriousness of the negotiation. When, on subsequently forming the Council of Government in his absence he appointed Caulaincourt to be one, the latter protested, and craved a military command. "If you do not consent to stay," observed Napoleon, "I shall depart, leaving behind me not a single friend on whom I can rely."

Could Napoleon have foreseen that the result of his first military operations would be an action, decisive one way or the other, he might have cared little for Fouché's unprincipled intrigues, or the wordy hostility of the Chambers. But a doubtful and prolonged struggle, such as that which Frederick the Great maintained against the coalition of his foes, could not but be weakened with such traitors as Fouché in the ministry, and with a Parliament haranguing for Parliamentary and popular rights, at a time when the independence and integrity of the country were menaced by a

million of greedy and vindictive soldiers. Napoleon is accused of having proposed to break the Chambers ere he set out for the field. "They have not given me a regiment, or a crown-piece," he said. Such bursts of choler, and of expressions in accordance with that choler, rather than with serious intention, were well understood by those who knew him,—by no one better than Fouché, whom, at this time, he threatened to hang as a traitor, "to no one's regret," the Emperor added; yet Fouché bade him a calm adieu, and thought no more of it. He took leave of the Chamber, declaring that the Constitution was his polar star, and that all should rally to it. He, at the same time, deprecated all discussion which led to diminish public confidence, so desirable at such a crisis. "Do not imitate," said he to the Deputies, "the politicians of the Lower Empire, who, pressed on all sides by barbarian foes, spent their time in abstraction and debate, when the machines of the enemy were battering the walls of the capital." His parting words to his ministers were equally touching, true, and prophetic. He addressed himself especially to Fouché:—

"Like all men about to die," observed the Emperor, "we have nothing to disguise from one another. If I fall, the patriots fall with me; and it would be the greatest of folly in you to betray me. After I have gone, you, Revolutionists, are for ever lost under the Bourbons. I am your last Dictator. Meditate upon my words."

On his return from Elba, the Emperor found the so lately colossal army of France reduced to 140,000 men. To raise it to double that number was feasible, for although the young generation of military age had been more than decimated, the garrisons and prisoners restored

to France by the peace supplied a number of veterans. To raise, enlist, and organize this force, and in a few weeks, was no light task. To equip them, find clothes, arms, horses, and guns, was even still more difficult. The great arsenals and large depôts of these military requirements, had been placed by Napoleon beyond the present frontier of France, and by their unconditional surrender of the fortresses, the Bourbons had given up all the Imperial store of guns and material. Napoleon was in the habit of devoting twelve millions sterling annually, to the maintenance of these materials of war, independent of his regular war budget, which amounted to as much, independent of other contributions raised in foreign countries. But now, to refit his army, and meet every other exigency, Napoleon had scarcely two millions sterling. "One million found in the treasury, was not more than sufficient," says M. Mollien, "to meet the demands upon it, left by the ousted Government." Stock to the value of four millions of francs was found in the Sinking Fund, and bills of the Receiver-General of Departments for a million and a half sterling, fell to the new Government. But such was the depression of the market, and the distrust of monied men, that little more than 40 per cent could be realized of these solid mortgages on the wealth of a great nation. Ouvrard advanced him two millions sterling. Sums of money, inconsiderable for his wants, yet remarkable as no delusive sign of the devotion of his admirers, were contributed in voluntary gifts, and placed often in the hands of the Emperor during a review, or when he appeared in public.

With these resources, Napoleon had upon his lists, at the commencement of June, little short of 300,000 soldiers, without counting the National Guard, destined some to

defend the fortresses, others to preserve tranquillity throughout a territory torn by so many conflicting parties. From this number, nearly a third were to be deducted for the sick, absent, and non-effective.

Of the 200,000 or 220,000 bayonets, which he could really muster, he had (supposing that he marched into Belgium with his main army), to leave 20,000 men in Alsace, 10,000 in the Jura, and 20,000 in Savoy—these 50,000 destined to check Austria and Piedmontese invasion; 10,000 were stationed in the south of France from Toulon to Toulouse, and 3,000 men at Bordeaux; the sea-ports and the Pyrenees required protection from the English and the Spaniards, whilst the disaffected populations of the south were with difficulty kept down. La Vendée, at the same time, served the Royal cause by the menacing attitude of its chiefs and population, which demanded an army of from 15,000 to 20,000 veterans under General Lamarque to awe it. Fouché pacified some of the chiefs by representing to them, that the fate of the Monarchy or the Empire would soon be decided in Flanders, and that blood would be idly spilt in La Vendée for a cause, which the million soldiers of the Allies would decide elsewhere. The Marquis Louis de la Rochejaquelin would not allow his army to be rendered idle by such consideration. He commenced open war, and fell a victim to his solitary and uncompromising enthusiasm.

Napoleon had but 120,000 men left, wherewith to operate offensively against the English and the Prussians, who, each with armies of 100,000 men, were cantoned across Belgium from Brussels to Namur. The necessities of finding provisions for the men and horses of such

armies kept them necessarily apart. Still there were but fifteen leagues between the two head-quarters. The Prussians touched the frontier, whereas the English were at least two marches removed from it, so that Napoleon could scarcely avoid coming into contact with the Prussians first. His purpose, however, was to fall merely on the advanced corps, which at Charleroi formed their right, drive it back on the main body towards Namur, and pushing on to occupy the roads and position between them and the English, force these either to abandon Brussels, or fight a battle to protect it, unaided by the Prussians.

The Emperor reached his army at Avesnes on the 13th. On the following morning was issued a stirring proclamation to the soldiers, informing them, that the time was come "to conquer or die."

The same day orders were given to the different chiefs and divisions to march to the frontier and pass it on the following morning, directing their march upon Charleroi. One of the generals of divisions whom this order reached was Monsieur De Bourmont. Though a Vendean, and attached to the Bourbons, he had solicited and accepted this command, Gerard and Ney both answering for his fidelity, and overcoming the objections of Napoleon. Bourmont no sooner found himself possessed of the Emperor's intention and military aim, than he galloped off with it to Blucher at Namur. Blucher received the traitor as he deserved, but made not the less use of his intelligence, by hastening to concentrate three corps of his army behind Charleroi, so as to be in force to meet the French. It was too late for Napoleon to change his plan. He pushed on, occupied Charleroi, and drove Ziethen, who commanded the Prussian corps quartered

there, behind it. Charleroi, Brussels, and Namur form three points of a triangle; two roads proceed north from Charleroi, one, the high road to Brussels, passing through Quatre Bras and Waterloo; another, which took a direction half way between Namur and Bruxelles, and bisected the roads between the English and Prussian quarters. Master of Charleroi, Napoleon summoned Ney, who had just arrived. Ney, Soult, and Mortier were the only three of his old Marshals whom he purposed employing at the main army. He left Davoust at the War-office in Paris, and Mortier now had an attack of sciatica, feigned or real, which disabled him. Soult filled the old office of Berthier, as head of the staff. Napoleon evidently mistrusted his old Marshals. He let none of them into the secret of his movement till the last moment. Ney and Mortier he only summoned on the eve of action. Ney did not get his command till the campaign had commenced. He saw the Emperor at Charleroi on the 15th. Their first words were about Bourmont's defection. Ney expressed his surprise and excuses, and the Emperor observed, "Those that are blue remain blue, those that are white are always white." He then ordered Ney to take two corps, those of D'Erlon and Reille, 18,000 men the one and 23,000 the other; with these to follow the road to Brussels and seize the position of Quatre Bras, where the road from Brussels branched off to Namur, and through which the English army in any attempt to succour or join the Prussians towards Namur must pass. "Do you know the position," asked Napoleon? "How should I not," replied the Marshal, "I was campaigning there twenty years ago." "Quatre Bras is the key of everything. Take the two corps, and be master of Quatre Bras

before midnight." Ney promised to be so in two hours. He was no sooner gone, than Napoleon pushed on the remainder of the army to Fleurus, driving Ziethen before him. On the night of the 15th, the two-thirds of the army with Napoleon bivouacked at Fleurus; of the remaining third, one division with Ney, instead of occupying Quatre Bras as the Marshal had promised, stopped short at Frasnes, the other division, that of D'Erlon, not having come up.

On the morning of the 16th the Emperor found, first of all, that Ney, with unaccountable remissness, had not occupied Quatre Bras; and, secondly, that instead of merely one division of the Prussian army, Blucher had concentrated three divisions, numbering upwards of 90,000 men before him. On the first tidings of Napoleon's advance, received from Bourmont or some other source, Blucher had marched at once from Namur to withstand the first brunt of the French, warning at the same time the Duke of Wellington to come to his succour. Receiving the intelligence on the night of the 15th at Brussels, the Duke had put his several corps in motion, and they reached Quatre Bras one after the other during the successive hours of the 16th. Ney, when he came up on that day, found a body of the enemy, not only equal to his own, for D'Erlon's division remained still behind, but able to offer formidable resistance. Having lost twenty precious hours, he resolved to redeem them by desperate charges of horse, in which arm, as well as artillery, he was vastly superior. But his enemies maintained themselves in the wood, or flung themselves into squares, around which the French cavalry could ride, but into which they could not penetrate; and possession of Quatre Bras Ney accordingly could not accomplish.

A certain portion, however, of Napoleon's design, the even tardy attack of Ney upon Quatre Bras allowed the Emperor to accomplish: this was to be able to fall upon as much of the Prussian army as presented itself, without their receiving any aid from the English. Blucher had posted himself on a long height or rising ground, at either end of which was a village, St. Amand and Ligny. He mustered 90,000 bayonets. Napoleon had about 70,000, French writers say not so many. Napoleon determined not the less to attack, and he reckoned certainly on driving the Prussians from their position. But this was not enough. It was necessary to rout and so discomfit them, that they would be unable for some time to rally and to bring any important aid to the British, when these in turn should be attacked by the greater part of the French force. In order to do this, he sent orders to Ney, whom he supposed in possession of Quatre Bras, to despatch one of his divisions, D'Erlon's, to fall upon the Prussians in flank and rear, whilst he attacked them in front. One of the aide-de-camps sent with this message encountered D'Erlon, who had not yet joined Ney, at Frasnes, and caused him to turn aside towards Ligny.

Napoleon wishing to give time for D'Erlon to arrive in the Prussian rear, waited till three o'clock, when he gave the signal of attack, which was directed against the two villages, whilst the artillery was directed against the corps held in reserve behind and between them. Both villages were fiercely defended by the Prussians, taken and retaken with varying and indecisive success: in the midst of which, however, Napoleon perceived that he was able to sustain the equal conflict with far less employment of men and with the keeping together a far larger reserve than Blucher.

In fact, he had his whole Guard yet fresh to pour in when Blucher had no longer a man. The Emperor paused before he struck the decisive blow, expecting tidings of D'Erlon, whose coming would have insured not merely victory but rout. And at one time D'Erlon did appear with his corps of 30,000 men, marching for Frasnes, at the order of Napoleon. But ere he could make his presence known to the Emperor, or fall upon the Prussians, a pressing despatch from Ney, under whose orders he was, peremptorily ordered his instant return to Quatre Bras, where the Marshal was scarcely able to hold his ground against the entire army of Wellington. Napoleon therefore waited in vain, and as evening fell was obliged to conclude the battle of Ligny, by directing the reserve of his Guard against the two villages. In the spent state of the Prussian army, these veteran troops not only carried both villages, but the Imperial cavalry completely rode down and defeated whatever Prussians endeavoured to stand or rally on the plain. Blucher himself was unhorsed and ridden over in the *mêlée;* and the Prussian division, not in irreparable disorder, or with any loss of guns, was driven from the field, but still in full retreat. By the unfortunate tardiness of Ney, first in not hurrying on D'Erlon's corps, then in not occupying Quatre Bras, Napoleon's want of a fresh division to complete his victory came to clash with Ney's necessity of maintaining his position, and D'Erlon, between the conflicting order of the two commanders, spent the 16th in marching back and forwards the two or three leagues which separated Frasnes and Quatre Bras from the field of Ligny. Had Ney performed his promise, or acted with his former energy, or had D'Erlon obeyed the Emperor's order rather than the command of him to

whom he was expressly subordinate, the Prussian army would have been put so completely *hors de combat* that Wellington himself would not have offered battle on the ridge of Waterloo. Ney was well aware that he was perilling the Emperor's entire plan of campaign, and was overheard frequently to breathe the wish that one of the cannon shot which tore the ground around him, would in sweeping him from existence put an end to the anguish of his mind.

No sooner was the English General made aware of the retreat of the Prussians, than he gave orders for withdrawing his troops from Quatre Bras, a position now useless to him. He concealed his movements by a strong rear-guard. Yet, could Napoleon have made an early resolve, united all his forces, and marched upon the English at Quatre Bras, or retreating from it, no doubt he could have fought with them a few hours' most advantageous battle on that day, without the possibility of being disturbed by the Prussians. He contented himself, however, with sending Ney fresh orders to attack Wellington, whilst he awaited at Ligny all the afternoon of the 17th, till made more fully aware of circumstances. He, then, as he had despatched 40,000 men under Ney on the previous day, to keep the English in check whilst he marched against the Prussians, now placed about an equal number under Grouchy, and despatched them in pursuit of the Prussians towards Gembloux and Wavre, whilst he himself, with 80,000, pursued the English.

The influential circumstances, the manifest cause of the failure, or half-execution of Napoleon's skilful plans throughout this brief campaign, were his choice of seconds in command. We have seen how little Ney was to be depended on, how unlike himself the Marshal had become.

Grouchy's claim to confidence and promotion was the celerity and steadiness with which he had defeated the Duc d'Angoulême's attempts in the south, terminated by his capture of that prince. It was Napoleon's intention, in case of his dividing his army into two wings and a centre, to have given the command of one to Ney and of the other to Mortier. Grouchy was to command the cavalry under Mortier; but this Marshal having been taken with sciatica, Grouchy obtained the command against the Prussians, the task being not difficult to pursue and keep up with a routed enemy, prevent it from returning to attack the main French army, or, in case Blucher should achieve this, to follow at least, and neutralize his efforts.

Mid-day of the 17th had passed ere these arrangements were completed, or Napoleon marched with his Guard upon Quatre Bras. Ney, he found, had not attacked as he was ordered. He feared to confront the whole English army again. Napoleon concealed his discontent, and forbore to chide his lieutenant, sending his cavalry in pursuit of the English general, and following himself with the rest of the army, as fast as a very wet evening, and an army harassed by severe fighting on the previous day, would admit.

Belgium is here a rolling country, rather than a plain. Beyond these undulations in the direction of Brussels, rose what the French call a *plateau*, or high plain, which at a certain distance was skirted by the lofty trees of the forest of Soignies. In September of the previous year, the Duke of Wellington, who had examined the surface of the country, with reference to the fortresses it required, and its mode of defence in case of future war, drew up a

memorandum, in which he mentions the "entrance of the Forest de Soignies, by the high road which leads to Brussels from Binch, Charleroi, and Namur,"* as an advantageous position. On this spot Wellington halted his army, on the evening of the 17th of June.

The battle-field was evidently of his choosing. Indeed, the position and the way in which the Prussians and English withstood the advance of the French, were altogether the selection and determination of the English General. It is evident from his correspondence with his colleague in command of the Prussians,† that the latter preferred not meeting the French until they had passed Brussels, and that it was the Duke who insisted on fighting south of that capital, and who recommended that, with this view, the Prussians should place their cantonments between Charleroi and Namur. Blucher followed the advice; the result of which was the battle of Ligny, in which, if the Prussians were not aided by the British joining them, they were as effectually supported by Ney's corps finding full occupation at Quatre Bras.

On the very ground alluded to in his memorandum of the previous September, the Duke halted his army on the evening of the 17th. From the position a road struck off to the left towards St. Lambert and Wavre, at which places Blucher had promised to rally, in order to advance with full speed on the following day to the succour of the British, should they be attacked, as seemed unmistakeably to be Napoleon's design. The French at first expected that their enemies would continue their retreat through the forest; but the fire of a battery, placed hastily to sweep

* Wellington Despatches, vol. xii., p. 129.
† Ibid., pp. 289, 290.

the road, and forbid further approach, warned them that the English army would fall back no further, at least on that night. The main body of the French, in the meantime, occupied the opposite ridge. Both armies recognized the broad valley that stretched between them as an apt field of battle for the morrow. The French halted, and made their dispositions in consequence.

Napoleon could not hesitate to give battle. He could have rushed into Belgium with no other view than to combat the Prussian and the British army, each by itself, his own force not much surpassing that of each singly. He succeeded, however, to a considerable extent, in facing and fighting one of them after the other. He had beaten 90,000 Prussians with 70,000 French. He had from 75 to 80,000 soldiers with him. And if Wellington had nearly the same number (the accurate accounts of the English make them about 70,000), there were but half of them English, whilst 20,000 of them were Belgians, French subjects a twelvemonth back, transferred since this to a Dutch Sovereign, for whom they could not be expected to feel enthusiasm. Wellington had in fact no right to count upon the Belgians being staunch, however naturally brave and good soldiers they might be; so that in firm bayonets and steady soldiers, the French were one-third more than the British.

We have most graphic accounts of the battle of Waterloo, and of the night and morning which preceded it in the French camp. We know of Napoleon's movements: from his first view of a British army, as he gained the eminence of La Belle Alliance, and his exclamation of, "I have these English at last," to his ride along the morrow's field in the dusk and the rain, his then issuing

forth from his bivouac at midnight and visit of the outposts, his observance of the silence of the English camp at night amidst the embers of their dying fires, that silence telling confidence and calm. No chronicler tells that Wellington passed the night different from the rest of his soldiers. Several despatches of his dated from Waterloo village, at three o'clock in the morning of the 18th, evince his not having given many hours to repose. At about the same hour Napoleon was under the walls of Hougoumont: deceived by a stir he heard on the eminence, and thinking it might be the commencement of matutinal retreat. But the sound died away; and at daylight the French prepared for action. The task was serious—the Generals took time to organize and order it. Napoleon's plan of battle was not drawn out at night as usual or communicated to his Generals at early dawn. The ground, saturated with rain, was unfavourable to the movement of guns and squadrons, and many hours of that important day had rolled away ere the French put themselves in motion to the sound of military music, with more than wonted parade, and in nearly a dozen columns marched and manœuvred so as to form on their own declivity several lines parallel to each other, and all bent so as to form an angle in the shape of a V. Less parade and more haste would have been advisable; for Blucher was at the time marshalling his battalions at Wavre. But Napoleon seemed to take a pleasure in setting about the defeat and destruction of the English army with cool leisure and contemplation. Every word of his expressed the confidence of success. He was anxious to learn whether the English general had thrown up any entrenchments. He had not done so. But a castle and

walled garden with extensive orchard of Hougoumont in the bottom of the valley in front of the English right was a fortress in itself; whilst the farm of La Haye Sainte, with its yard enclosed either by walls or buildings, and immediately skirting the high road at Brussels (which ran through the middle of the British position) was another advanced post equally fortified. To make himself master of these two positions, and from thence and behind them direct repeated attacks against the English line, taking care, as he had done at Ligny, always to keep a powerful reserve to achieve the last and decisive effort:—such was Napoleon's plan, completely disturbed afterwards by the advance of the Prussians from Wavre, unchecked and even unpursued by Grouchy.

Taking station himself on the height near the apex of the triangle which his army formed, seated with chair and table on a kind of carpet of straw spread out, with his charts and telescopes and writing materials around him, the Emperor gave at eleven o'clock the signal for the attack on Hougoumont. It was gallantly conducted by Jerome Bonaparte. The British were driven at the first onset from the wood into the castle and enclosures. Wellington had posted the Guards there with some of the best troops, with orders to hold to the last, whilst La Haye Sainte, which guarded the road, was committed to the German Legion.

Napoleon ordered Ney to direct this attack on the farm, to insure the result of which no less than eighty heavy guns were brought as low, and as near as was expedient, so as to sweep the high ground above the road as the attacking column marched up it. Ney took a considerable time to make his preparations, so that

although the fight had commenced, and was continued at Hougoumont, it was past mid-day ere Ney announced that he was ready to make the first real onset of the battle.

Ere the Marshal received the word to do so, Napoleon's telescope caught within its field an ominous black shot a couple of leagues off on his right. What was it? An illusion, a forest? No—a body of troops. No order could be given for further operations on the actual field till this was cleared up. It was soon suspected to be a Prussian column. A large body of cavalry was ordered to observe it; and messenger after messenger was despatched in search of Grouchy to inform him that he had ill performed his task: that instead of pursuing and employing the Prussians, he had allowed them to march on the Emperor's flank; and to order or entreat him to repair his error by hastening to the field. Meantime more certitude was obtained of the body of troops, which menaced from St. Lambert. Their scouts were seen, and it was ascertained to be Bulow's corps of 30,000 Prussians, those who had taken no part in the battle of Ligny, who were now advancing upon the French. On this Napoleon drafted 10,000 infantry from his army under the Count de Lobau in order to check the Prussians. The Emperor observed to Soult that he had ninety chances to ten against the English—(why did he delay in taking advantage of them?)—but that Bulow's arrival had nearly equalized the chances. Grouchy's arrival, however, would put all right, and even render the victory more decisive, by enveloping Bulow in the English defeat.

Having made this disposition, and it being past one

o'clock, Napoleon gave orders for Ney to attack. The order was executed with five-and-twenty thousand men, principally D'Erlon's fresh corps in three divisions, Ney himself leading the central one by the high road, the two others on either side of it, eighty French guns firing over their heads on the high ground above, which it was the object of the attack to carry. Never, perhaps, was the inability of the pen to give a clear idea or consecutive account of a death struggle between large bodies of men more manifest than in the account of this attack: the French themselves are not agreed as to the number or direction of their columns, as to the nature of their first success, or the cause of their subsequent repulse. Each column had an ascent to overcome to reach the first English line, which was drawn up on the crest of the ridge. The English firing in line, whilst the French attacked in columns, the former did much more execution, but the masses of the columns enabled them to advance athwart the foremost bodies of English infantry, and then the French columns *deployed*, or strove to extend their serried columns into line to return the enemy's fire with effect. In the midst of the manœuvre they were charged by the English cavalry, which swept before it, not the masses of the French columns, but all that was between them or on their side; and, carried away by their impetuosity, the English dragoons, especially the Scotch Greys, fell upon a portion of Ney's artillery that was advancing up the road in the rear, cut the traces and upset the carriages in the mire. Napoleon here attacked them with fresh cavalry, and punished them severely for their audacious and successful charge. Meantime the French columns on the brow of the hill came under the

fire of the second British line of infantry and of the troops that Wellington concentrated to resist them, and the result was, after much severe fighting, that Ney's columns were compelled to retrace their steps down the hill, up which they had lately marched so victoriously. The men first withdrew, however, in good order behind the farm of La Haye Sainte, which, having in the meantime been captured by the French, served as a rallying point and a bulwark for those within a very short distance of the front and centre of the British. The stout resistance of the Guards in the chateau of Hougoument prevented it from being turned to the same use.

Ney's first attack commenced before one o'clock, and continued, with varying features, for an hour and a half, when it was repulsed. Napoleon, however, never contemplated carrying the positions of a British army, under such a general as Wellington, in one attack. The Emperor rode down from his station behind the field, in order personally to examine how far Ney's check had been serious, and how much it was requisite to reinforce him. Ney was busily employed rallying his men, and forming them into column for a renewal of the attack. It was Napoleon's original intention to have supported him by the Young Guard, but these, under Lobau, had been detached, to check the Prussians, and Napoleon could only place behind Ney, as reserve, the cuirassiers and the cavalry of the Guard. The latter, though placed at the disposal of Ney, were not to be employed by him unless in case of necessity.

Between three and four o'clock Ney commenced his second attack, but almost altogether with cavalry; and this time his onset was even more successful than at first. The

French broke through two squares of infantry, one composed of Hanoverians, and could Napoleon have supported Ney by fresh infantry, and could the latter have brought up his guns to the heights, the battle would have been fought there with more even success; but at the moment Bulow's corps was pressing hard upon the rear of the French right, and Napoleon had to repel the Prussians before he could effectually support Ney. The latter, in order to hold his ground, was compelled to summon to his assistance the cavalry of the Guard, which would have been much more useful later; however, summoned up to the plateau, they swept clean every portion of it that was not covered by the English infantry in squares, thus rendering almost all the English artillery useless, the guns, being abandoned and the artillerymen retreating within the squares. Could the French have brought off their guns, it would have been something, but the gunners always took off one wheel, and all the efforts of the French cavalry with cords could not drag off a single cannon. At the same time this cavalry made the most desperate and gallant charges against the squares of British, but always in vain. As General Foy, who was present, has described it, "the English seemed to have taken root in the ground." The hopes that such steady soldiers could be broken into or ridden down by any amount of cavalry, even so steel-clad, without an overwhelming artillery, to make large breaches in their squares, was idle. Napoleon blamed Ney for thus throwing away his cavalry. "It was hours too soon!" Ouvrard overheard the Emperor exclaiming.*

* All the French accounts of the action have been given in a manner to represent the second attack of Ney, or some attack of Ney, as so far and so fully successful as to leave him master of the plateau and village of Mont St

Meantime, not only the Prussians, under Bülow, were attacking the right of the French position, and were with difficulty kept in check, but other Prussian divisions were hastening to join the English left on the other side of the valley. Ney, at the time, after two or three hours of vain efforts to maintain himself on the high plains of the English position, was rallying his men about the farm-house of La

Jean, all the Belgian troops, and many of the English, flying at the same time, and spreading panic to the gates of Brussels. Even Lamartine, who seeks to be fair and laudatory to the Duke of Wellington, assumes this to be true, and joins it with a host of apocryphal facts, such as the Duke ordering the curbs to be taken from the bridles of his cavalry, and a distribution of spirits to be made to the horsemen. As to the amount of success which the French at any time attained, we may rely upon the Duke's own words, in a letter written in answer to queries addressed to him, I believe by Mr. Wilson Croker. The letter is in vol. xii. of the "Wellington Despatches," p. 609, and is as follows:—

"The battle began, I believe, at eleven. It is impossible to say when each important occurrence took place, nor in what order. We were attacked first with infantry only; then with cavalry only; lastly and principally with cavalry and infantry mixed. No houses were possessed by the enemy on Mont St. Jean, excepting the farm in front of the left of our centre, on the road to Genappe, can be called one. This they got, I think, at about two o'clock, from a circumstance (want of ammunition) attributable to the neglect of the officer commanding on the spot. The French cavalry were on the *plateau* in the centre between the two high roads for nearly three-quarters of an hour, riding about among our squares of infantry, all firing having ceased on both sides. I moved our squares forward to the guns; and our cavalry, which had been detached by Lord Uxbridge to the flanks, were brought back to the centre. The French cavalry were then driven off. After that circumstance, repeated attacks were made along the whole front of the centre of the position by cavalry and infantry till seven at night. How many I cannot tell. When the enemy attacked Sir Thomas Picton I was there, and they got as far as the hedge on the cross-road, behind which the (Belgians) had been formed. The latter had run away, and our troops were on one side of the hedge. The French were driven off with immense loss. This was the first principal attack. At about two in the afternoon they got possession of the farm-house on the high road, which defended this part of the position; and then they took possession of a small mound on the left of the high-road going from Brussels, immediately opposite the gate of the farm; and they were never removed from thence till I commenced the attack in the evening; but they never advanced farther on this side."

This is conclusively contradictory of all the French accounts, and even of many of the English statements.

Haye Sainte, for a third attack. He warned Napoleon of his intention, and the Emperor, both the evening and the Prussians closing upon him, determined on supporting Ney by sending to him the last of his reserve, with a great portion of the Old Guard. Whilst Ney and the Emperor were thus concerting a renewal of their assaults, the English general considered that it was time for him to assume the offensive, supported as he was by the Prussian advance. Wellington, therefore, was collecting troops, to make an attack upon the farm of La Haye Sainte, and recover it, when he perceived the French column of the Guard and the reserve that Napoleon had launched, and that Ney was about to lead on a kind of forlorn-hope. The English Commander instantly hurried his preparatives, to give Ney for a third time, a warm and crushing reception. He brought out artillery, all the disposable cavalry, and after receiving the advancing French with a concentrated fire, the Duke, no longer ordering his soldiers to fall in squares, or the artillerymen to run from their guns, gave, on the contrary, the decisive word to the Guards to rise, and "Be at them!" The order to advance was at the same time given to every portion of the British army, and the soldiers, feeling that the eight or nine hours spent by them in maintaining their position with passive constancy and unflinching courage, had accomplished their commander's aim of wearing out and disorganizing the enemy, now rushed with alacrity and confidence to attack in their turn. Napoleon had eyed with anxiety the progress of Ney's formidable column. He had marked that it no longer, as on the first attack, could surmount and maintain itself on the summit of the ridge. He no longer saw the English forming squares on the defensive. On the contrary, the

red-coats charged the dense columns of French soldiers not only in front, but along the sides, and even in the rear. The result was, that the two bodies of English and French soldiery became mingled, and fought hand-to-hand, in confusion. When the Emperor saw this befall his last column of attack, he uttered the words, "*Ils sont melés ensemblé*," and his look bespoke that he gave up all for lost. At first his intention seemed to be to place himself at the head of some of the troops and perish in a last effort at resistance; but the Guards, shattered in the last attack, were rallying at some distance from him, and whilst the Prussians' shot swept the high road upon which the English cavalry was already advancing, Napoleon got on horseback and rode from the field. Fortunate were the troops and the generals, who were surrounded, and compelled, after a few minutes' resistance, to surrender, for the flight was a chaos of suffering, privation, and bloodshed. Not a single regiment kept together. Those who escaped must either have commenced their flight in time, or continued it by by-roads and across fields, for the Prussians, who had scarcely been in action, and were fresh, scoured the roads, anxious to wash out their defeat at Ligny. Wellington and Blucher met at the farm house of La Belle Alliance, and congratulated each other on so speedy and unexpected a termination of the war.

"I should not do justice to my feelings," writes the Duke in his official despatches, "or to Marshal Blucher and the Prussian army, if I did not attribute the successful result of this arduous day to the cordial and timely assistance I received from them. The operation of General Bulow upon the enemy's flank was a most decisive one; and even if I had not found myself in a

situation to make the attack which produced the final result, it would have forced the enemy to retire if his attacks should have failed, and would have prevented him from taking advantage of them if they should unfortunately have succeeded."

It is impossible to sum up and distribute the different parts and results which the English and Prussian armies and generals played and achieved in the action with more justice and precision than the Duke of Wellington himself has done in these few words.

CHAPTER VII.

LIBERALISM OF ALEXANDER—ROYALISTS AT GHENT—RESISTANCE OF THE DEPUTIES TO NAPOLEON—THEY COMPEL HIS SECOND ABDICATION—POSITION OF THE ALLIES—FIRMNESS OF WELLINGTON—RETURN OF THE KING—FOUCHÉ'S APPOINTMENT—LOUIS RE-ENTERS THE CAPITAL.

THE Emperor Alexander, whose personal opinion and influence had chiefly weighed in the settlement of France under its old dynasty and a verbal constitution, was more than any other man mortified by its failure. Singular it was, that the autocrat of a nation like Russia should have come to entertain such a generous and noble faith in constitutional principles, that the signal failure of his first essay of them upon France did not shake his belief in them. His brother sovereigns at Vienna by no means shared his views or predilections. The King of Prussia, though he had let drop the magic word Constitution when appealing to his subjects for their support, recoiled already from a system so difficult to make harmonize with his military and centralized and heterogeneous monarchy. Whilst Prussia mistrusted a constitution, Austria could not comprehend it; and the Emperor Ferdinand wishing to reproach his brother Alexander with having patronized

the Constitutionalists and their ideas in France, said to him on Napoleon's return, "This comes of the favour you showed to the Jacobins." The good man saw no difference between Robespierre and Lafayette.

Alexander was piqued by such reproaches from his brother despots. They formed one cause of his resentment against Napoleon, and determination not to treat with him. But he was equally dissatisfied with the Bourbons. He agreed with the English plenipotentiaries in attributing Napoleon's first successful march to the unpopularity which the Bourbons had achieved, and to the imbecile Government which they had installed. And no doubt they were much to blame. But the preponderance of the military spirit in France, the number of the profession, the sympathy which prevailed between it and the peasant as well as the more uneducated of the civic population, rendered discontent with the Bourbons a national sentiment too deep for the wisest direction of Constitutional Government to have overcome and eradicated, so far at least as to have offered effectual resistance to the return of the national hero, with whose name the glory of France and of its army was identified. It would be unfair to say that Alexander and Wellington expected too much from Constitutional Government; but they ought not to have expected miracles from the mere name and shadow. Nor was it to be hoped that the French would sacrifice their feelings and their pride for a kind of freedom which had so often come in delusive shape, which never realized any benefits, and which was unfortunately given by their enemies, and connected with their humiliation. Still it was the opinion of Alexander, of Wellington, and even of Metternich, that the facile overthrow of the Bourbons was

owing to their illiberalism and to their want of skill or will in conciliating the French, such as the Revolution and the Empire had made them.

This opinion was, no doubt, in a great measure true. The Bourbons, given up to the councils, and surrounded exclusively by men of the royalist emigration, lived in the ideal world of the past, and strove to make France retrograde thither. Louis XVIII. at Ghent had M. De Blacas for his Chamberlain and Prime Minister, just as he had M. De Blacas lord of his ante-chamber at the Tuileries. Alexander and Wellington insisted, that if they restored Louis XVIII. he should have some other minister and a more national policy. In following up such sound ideas they should have recommended Louis XVIII. to go to the Constitutional party for ministers. There were tried Royalists amongst them, able men. There was Lainé, Lafayette himself, Chateaubriand, men of all shades of opinion and capacity. The debates and the writings of 1814, however brief and barren, had at least revealed a portion of national talent. But the sovereigns or statesmen who undertook to provide a government for France knew that country as little as Louis XVIII. himself, and looked with as little judgment or profundity into its political world of either things or men. Instead of knowing and appreciating the parliamentary talent, the thinkers, the writers, the personal elements of parties, their rising and causes, the combined wisdom and experience of Alexander, of Wellington, and of Talleyrand, could see no one save Fouché to act liberal counsellor to Louis XVIII.

That treacherous, restless, and unprincipled personage, trusted by Napoleon with the police, had taken advantage of his office, not merely to spread a net of intrigue over

France, with what aim he knew not himself, and indeed he scarcely cared, provided he fed his own activity, and kept afloat his own importance. In the same spirit he opened communications, and kept up correspondence with Prince Metternich, with the Count D'Artois, with the Duke of Orleans, with the Duke of Wellington, with Talleyrand, holding out different hopes to all, and making himself pass for a prodigy of influence. To them he represented himself, as he did to Napoleon, the chief of the old Revolutionary party, and Republicans and Jacobins, whom he could tranquillize or crush as he pleased. Napoleon believed him, and had not scrupled for a time to speak the jargon which suited this supposed party; but he derived no force whatever from it, simply owing to the fact, that such did not exist, save in the imagination or in the vaunts of Fouché. The Jacobins who survived were but a few trustless intriguers, who gave themselves the credit with Fouché of raising mobs, and bestirring faubourgs, whilst in fact the population of Paris and of other great towns had forgotten their voice, imbibed other sentiments, and become far more soldier than democratic, more Bonapartist than republican. Fouché's power and Fouché party were, in fact, visionary; and Louis XVIII., as well as Bonaparte, in stooping to it, were but dupes of their own fears and their own ignorance.

The Constitutionalists had on their side rendered themselves suspected by the King. They had not followed him to Ghent. They saw his failure, rather than his deposition with regret. They had not welcomed Bonaparte. Some of them, especially Constant, had listened to him, and aided him in the task of concocting a Charter in rivalry with that of St. Ouen. The Constitutionalists consented to

make part of the Bonaparte Chamber, and though they showed mistrust of Napoleon, rather than love of him or his dynasty, still they had gone too far to be pardoned by Louis XVIII. A fraction of the Constitutionalists, of those more royalist than constitutional, had indeed repaired to Ghent. Though divided in opinion, they still agreed that the true strength of the King lay in his throne being the sole basis for a Constitutional Government. To represent the Bourbons to France, as the restorers of its liberties, was their aim; and for this purpose they founded a journal, to be printed at Ghent, and dispersed through France. Bertin, of the Journal des Débats, Chateaubriand, Guizot, were the writers of the royalist constitutional party, which expected Louis to appeal to the party of civism and peace, to conciliate the middle and the educated classes, to admit the freedom of the press, sanction public liberties, trust to public opinion, and fling themselves honestly and fearlessly on the nation, setting aside the Blacases on one side and the Fouchés on the other.

Whilst this was the not very successful effort at Ghent, the Constitutionalists in Paris, who had taken the rash oath of fidelity to Napoleon, as member of his Parliament, were seeking to redeem this, and showing their independence by idle acts of opposition. Count Roy, the wealthiest man of the day, made a motion or a speech against the illegal act of the Emperor, in marching against the Allies without the previous sanction of the Chamber. When such was the puerile spirit of cavil against Napoleon, yet unconquered, what was the hostility, as soon as the event of Waterloo was learned, and its result in the presence of Napoleon at the palace of the Elysée? His purpose, announced to his Ministers, was to carry on the struggle still,

and to employ resistance with what forces he could muster in order to obtain honourable terms from the Allies. But all his ministers, save Carnot, all his councillors save Lucien, were horrified at the idea of further resistance, which might expose the capital to the consequences of a city taken by assault, and the country itself to treatment equally severe. They represented to him that the Chamber, far from aiding, would throw obstacles in the way of further military resistance. And Napoleon did not hesitate to admit that the resistance he contemplated, necessitated a declaration of Paris being in a state of siege, and the removal of the Chambers to a town more remote from the enemy. This would be for the members to mark themselves out for exile and proscription. They were all unanimous against the Emperor; and when Lafayette rose and proposed that the Chamber should declare itself *en permanence*, to denounce as traitor, whosoever should attempt to dissolve it, to summon National Guards and line to rally to it, to order the Ministers to repair to the Assembly, and in short to proclaim it a power in the State, coequal and superior to the Emperor, the motion was carried. This was in fact the dethronement of the Emperor. He regarded it as such, and was half-resigned to his fate, yet was shocked at the peremptory command of the Chamber summoning his Ministers from the Emperor's presence and orders to their own. He protested, and forbade his Ministers to obey. This was the signal for one of them, Fouché, to send a private message to the leaders in the Chamber to persist. They in obedience named an Administrative Commission of five, in other words, an Executive, and proposed to name a Commander of the National Guard, independent of Napoleon.

In order to induce the Chamber to desist from such an attitude of open hostility, Napoleon despatched to it his brother Lucien, who, demanding the exclusion of the public, entreated the Assembly in the name of the Emperor to join with him in an effort of defence, which could alone save France from the fate of Poland. The Chamber did not fear the threat, or believe in the alternative. They saw in the Emperor's proposal merely a selfish wish to cling to power, and thought they themselves, with an olive branch, could much more advantageously treat with the Allies than Napoleon armed. Such was Lafayette's idea, in which he was supported by Dupin, by Marmont, and by Roy. Lucien's proposal was responded to by recrimination, not adherence, and by violent demands for the abdication of the Emperor.

Benjamin Constant has described in a note to his "Hundred Days," his last interview with Napoleon. It was after that the Chambers, or their leader, had signified to him the necessity of his abdication. His abdication was, indeed, every one's idea after the first news of Waterloo; that is, it was the idea of the educated classes, who only tolerated his return from Elba, and the military effort he was about to make. The people had other sentiments—Waterloo had augmented their sympathy for the Emperor.

The first words of Benjamin Constant to the fallen potentate were those of commiseration for his present and future state:—

"Do not be concerned for me," replied Napoleon, "think of the fate of France. I am asked to abdicate. Have those who ask, calculated the inevitable consequences? The army is grouped about me, and about my name; to take me away is to dissolve it. In two days after my

abdication, France has no longer an army. The soldiers do not understand your parliamentary subtilties, your debates, your declarations of rights. I understand the Constitutionalists rejecting me when I landed at Cannes; I cannot comprehend their doing so now, when the enemy is within five-and-twenty leagues of us. In abandoning me, France delivers herself up to the conqueror."

Napoleon then recapitulated his military resources, and said, that, with the army, the peasants and the working classes remained true to him. As he spoke, the shouts of a multitude were heard, filling the Avenue de Marigny, which skirts the garden wall of the Palace, proffering their hearts and arms to defend the Emperor and the national cause.

"You see," exclaimed Napoleon, "these are not the men on whom I heaped riches and honour. I found the people poor, and I leave them so. The instinct of what is necessary enlightens them; the voice of the country speaks by their mouth. How easy a word, a wish of mine would overwhelm the Chamber by the popular cry! But the life of man is not worth this; I did not come back from Elba to inundate Paris with blood."

He spoke truly enough. He could have appealed to the lower classes against the enmity of the middle and educated ranks; and he would have done so, had the issue of the renewed military struggle been clear and hopeful; but to crush the Parliament, such as it was, to enter upon a military forlorn hope, was impossible. Napoleon succumbed,—the chief man of the Chamber, Lafayette, having come to the Elysée personally to demand his abdication. "His attitude," says Lafayette himself, "was noble and calm. He would sacrifice, he said, his power

to his son." Whatever glory or advantage there might have been in thus getting rid of him whom the fate of arms had humbled, it was certainly due to Lafayette. But few hours passed before he himself had proof of the gratitude of parties and assemblies. Of the five or six names which were to compose the Provisional Government, Lafayette naturally expected to be one; but although the name of Fouché was there, that of Lafayette was not. He was merely nominated one of the envoys, who were to go and propose, or negociate conditions of peace with the victorious Allies.

The abdication, nominally in favour of his son, but really that of his race—for Napoleon II. was the captive of Austria—was given on the 22nd of June. On the following day, the Commission of Government met at the Tuileries. Fouché was declared President; the other members were the Duke of Vicenza, Baron Quinette, Carnot, and General Grenier. The parliamentarians, the professional politicians, the representatives of the middle and educated classes, and Constitutionalists in form, had become as they desired, masters of the government, and, as the French say, of the *situation*. The army, discomfited, but not destroyed, was ready to rally to whatever personage or power showed courage, consistency, and skill; but the personages who had shown such energy to dethrone Napoleon and wield power, knew not in the least how to make use of it. Each had different opinions. One believed in Napoleon II., another put trust in the Duke of Orleans; whilst the latter prince was as silent and as nullified by his own timidity, as the former by being immured in an Austrian palace. In truth, Fouché was but a player of puppets, which he dangled, at one time the revolutionary party, at another the King of Rome, and

again, the Duke of Orleans, before those who looked open-mouthed to him for political wisdom and direction. There was no party of the Duke of Orleans, beyond a few dreamers, eager to find some middle line between the Bourbons and the Bonapartes. There was no party of Napoleon II.; for the Bonapartists, in abandoning Napoleon I., had signed their own abdication, as well as his There were no *French people*, that name which Carnot worshipped, and in which name, to please him, Fouché, for a few days, carried on the government. The people understood Napoleon, and his resistance to foreign arms and dictation; that being despaired of, there was no use or possibility of appealing to the people. Still, amidst this variety of aims and allegiances, the professional politicians of Paris thought themselves quite safe. They had no doubt that Lafayette and his brother envoys would impose conditions upon the Allies. But the Sovereigns refused to see these plenipotentiaries, who had neither government, nor people, nor anything else behind them; and when they were received by the Ministers of the Powers, they were treated as they deserved, with a mixture of trifling and contempt. Lord Stuart, Capo d'Istria, and other representatives of the different Powers, visited Lafayette and his colleagues at Hagueneau, but evidently more to learn what they had to say, than with any serious purpose. Lord Stuart told Lafayette that he must deliver up Bonaparte, at which Lafayette was of course indignant Lord Stuart then expressed doubts as to the present Chamber of Deputies having any legitimate rights. Lafayette replied that a Representative Assembly derived its right from those who elected, not from him who convoked; in other words, the Chamber, summoned by Napoleon, and having

sworn fidelity to Napoleon, was no more implicated in Napoleon's acts or government. Having elicited from Lafayette and his colleagues all they had to say, Lord Stuart abruptly broke up the conference by pretending he had no powers to treat; and so the Constitutional envoys went as they came.

In Paris there was equal forwardness to play the game of politics without any force behind, or any clear views before. They seemed to think that the Emperor dethroned, Fouché was like a magician, to represent and to order their acts and movements by his great sagacity. He was to be another Talleyrand, but a Talleyrand that would set up a Napoleon regency, or an Orleans régime. Whilst Fouché was encouraging these hopes, uttering Orleans' constitutionalism to civilians, Napoleon II. and Marie Louise to military men, and was flattering his colleague Carnot with the reign of the sovereign people, he himself had liberated the friend of Louis XVIII., M. de Vitrolles, from Vincennes, installed him in an apartment near his own, and facilitated to the utmost his communications with Ghent, and with the Royalists of Paris. Fouché, at the same time, kept up his correspondence with the Allied Powers, and took credit for having all along laboured for the royalist restoration. He represented himself, indeed, as still labouring towards this end by the spies and agents and coercion with which he surrounded Napoleon at Malmaison, and with which he precipitated the Emperor's departure for Rochefort. When the plans of Fouché and Vitrolles were complete, when several of the Marshals were won over, and when Davoust had lent his countenance and his secret aid, Fouché informed first the Constitutionalists, and through them the Chamber, that there was nothing

left but to proclaim the restoration of Louis XVIII., and submit unconditionally to the exigencies of the Allies.

All that occurred in Paris during the last ten days of June, and which Lafayette and his friends ever loved to depict as a work of wisdom and of heroism, was, in fact, a miserable farce, of which the fallen Emperor was the victim, of which the Constitutionalists were the dupes, and of which Fouché was, with short-lived power and profit to himself, the unprincipled Mephistophiles.

The Allied Powers or their Sovereigns were as unsettled in their views, as the politicians of Paris. Notwithstanding the written engagement taken at Vienna to make war upon France and reconquer it in the name of Louis XVIII., they were far from being true, or firm, or united in such a determination. Metternich, as we have seen, had entered into secret communications with Fouché, in which the succession of Napoleon II. under a regency was more than mooted. Alexander had his fears of the irrevocable unpopularity of the Bourbons, and his personal dislike of Louis XVIII. There was one man, amongst the victorious allies, now invading France, who, however wary in character and slow to form a judgment or embrace a cause, was, once that he took a resolution or made a choice, not to be shaken from its maintenance. This was the Duke of Wellington. In 1814 he had been no uncompromising admirer of the Duke d'Angoulême and Louis XVIII., and had protested against being considered as their champion. But in 1815 it was different. There was no very solid or satisfactory foundation for any throne in France, but the only foundation that existed was the legitimate right of Louis XVIII. The people would have preferred a Bonaparte, no doubt, but that implied future

war and Austrian influence. The name of the Duke of Orleans was put forward as a parliamentary King, but where was the Parliament, or when would there be one, that possessed the confidence of the people. The other reason of Wellington has been mentioned. His views accorded completely with those of Talleyrand; and from the very field of Waterloo, the Duke proposed the French King at once to re-enter France. If the Duke put trust in Fouché, it was that he believed him to be of the same faith and conviction; and no doubt Fouché was so, as soon as he saw no other possible. One man of resolve is necessarily the lord of a whole legion of waverers. So it was with Wellington. His will proved as indomitable, and his views as triumphant, on the great field of European policy then opening, as upon that of Waterloo itself. At his bidding, Louis XVIII. recrossed the frontier into his dominions, and under the same influence dismissed M. de Blacas as the sign of altered policy, more liberal intentions, and more popular principles.

In a proclamation, dated Chateau Cambresis, on the 25th of June, Louis takes credit to himself for forbidding the Princes of his family or his French partizans to join those foreign armies, which were the instruments of Divine vengeance upon the usurper. Now that their efforts had discomfited tyranny and its satellites, Louis announced that he returned to his kingdom to re-establish the Constitution, to repair by all the means at his disposal the sad consequences of revolt and war, to recompense the good, put the laws in execution against the guilty, and to rally around a paternal throne the great mass of the French, whose courage, fidelity, and devotion had been the cause of such consolation. From Cambray

he issued another proclamation, in which he reminded his subjects by what cruel trials they had just been taught that the principle of legitimacy in sovereign power is one of the fundamental bases of social order, the only one on which, in the midst of a great people, a wise and well-ordered liberty can be established. This doctrine has just been proclaimed as that of united Europe. "I had previously consecrated it in my charter," said Louis, "and it is my intention to add to that charter all the guarantees that may be required."

Wellington and Blucher, in the meantime, precipitated their advance on Paris: the latter excited by blind ardour and vengeance, the former anxious to rescue France from its own factions, and restore it to the Bourbon princes, without giving its enemies a pretext or an opportunity for mulcting it of territory. Notwithstanding all the efforts of Fouché, the Chamber could not be brought to reason, nor the Provisional Government and minister to accept inevitable results. Whilst Louis XVIII. was at Cambray, and the Allied armies approaching Paris, commissioners were sent to the generals of the latter to induce them to suspend their march and conclude an armistice. M. Bignon, Provisional Minister of Foreign Affairs, drew out a long series of instructions for them. They were to sound Wellington and Blucher on the expediency of giving the crown to Napoleon II. or to the Duke of Orleans. The Duke received the commissioners with great civility; but said that an armistice was impossible with so unstable and irregular a government, and with Napoleon's lieutenants, if not Napoleon himself, commanding an army in the capital. It was not difficult to show Napoleon II. to be unacceptable; and even in case of the Duke of Orleans

being proclaimed, and his accepting the sovereignty, which was doubtful, the Allies would feel obliged to take more territorial guarantees against such a Prince, and thus deprive France of some of its best provinces, which they might be inclined to leave to Louis XVIII. and to him only.

Whilst Fouché allured the parliamentarians to set forth on this fool's errand, he was deep in council with the military party, with Oudinot and Davoust, who had come to an understanding with Macdonald and the Royalists. The anxiety was to prevent another occupation of the capital by foreign armies. As military defence had been declared impossible, by Ney in the Chamber of Peers, by Davoust himself, and by Grouchy, these generals admitted that Louis XVIII. was the only alternative. Even Grouchy, who had cherished the idea of the Duke of Orleans, admitted this. They hoped, that by proclaiming Louis XVIII. in Paris, with the adherence of the Marshals and of some of the army, an armistice might first be concluded, and then a treaty, avoiding the humiliating extreme of a second occupation of Paris. Macdonald and Hyde de Neuville set forth upon this errand to Louis XVIII. But what Blucher was most determined upon, was to humiliate the French, to reoccupy Paris, and inflict there some signal marks of his vengeance. For this purpose he exchanged military positions with the English, and crossed to the left bank of the Seine, where there were no fortifications or defences of any kind, leaving Wellington to advance on the right bank, where certain works had been thrown up in connexion with the line of the canal. The Count d'Artois had reached head-quarters. Louis XVIII. was at hand. Fouché begged of the Allied

generals not to press on too rudely, nor provoke Paris to defend itself. "The army," he said, "was discontented and irritated, and means must be found for getting it out of Paris." M. Bignon, with Generals Guilleminot and Gouvion St. Cyr, betook themselves to the head-quarters of Blucher, preferring to go thither rather than to the Duke of Wellington, who was all in favour of Louis XVIII.; but Blucher would have nothing to do with them as envoys of any Government or members of any Chamber. "He would treat of the capitulation of Paris," he said, "with the general commanding in Paris, with Marshal Davoust, no other." The commissioners were compelled to get powers signed by Davoust. Blucher had at the time his head-quarters at the chateau of St. Cloud, whilst Wellington had his in the chateau of Neuilly. The Allied generals met the French at St. Cloud, and they totally refused to treat on any subject save the military surrender of Paris, with such terms as its municipal authorities might demand. Political conditions they refused to discuss. The result was a capitulation, for which Fouché substituted the word convention, signed on the night of the 3rd of July, stipulating a suspension of arms, and the retirement of the French army under Davoust behind the Seine.*

* The 11th and 12th articles of this Convention are important, from their being afterwards invoked by the advocates of Ney and other accused persons. They were as follows:—

"All public property, with the exception of that connected with warlike defence, whether belonging to Government or the municipality, shall be respected, and the Allied Powers will in nowise interfere with them. The persons and property of individuals will be likewise respected. The inhabitants of the capital, and in general all individuals in it, shall continue to enjoy their rights and liberties, without being sought after or disquieted on account of the functions they may have filled or have occupied, or on account of their political conduct or opinions."

Such was the conclusion which every man of sense aware of circumstances must have foreseen, but which nobody in Paris would contemplate till the reality was forced upon them; the army very nearly mutinied, and was only prevented doing so by two million of francs, patriotically advanced by Lafitte. The people, when they saw Prussian and English relieving sentinels at the gates, showed some intention of recurring to arms. Carnot denounced Fouché at the meeting of the members of the Government. "He had conspired with M. De Vitrolles, a known royalist," said Carnot, "and has come to a treacherous understanding with Davoust to bring back Louis XVIII."—"Ah," said Fouché, smiling, "you have discovered that Vitrolles is a Royalist: I thought every one knew that. And the Prince of Eckmuhl is denounced as well as myself. Carnot had better go and arrest him in the middle of his camp. He may accuse me too from the tribune of the Chamber. Be it so, I await the attack."

Fouché felt strong in the skill with which he had contrived to render or to represent himself necessary to all parties. He was the intermediary between the generals of the discomfited French army and the representatives of the Allied Powers, as he was also the intercessor with them and with the King, for the respect and protection of revolutionary interests. To the Duke of Wellington Fouché's co-operation was valuable, he being the only man who then actually held the reins of power, and who not only had influence with the French generals, but all the knowledge and power, and agencies of the police in his grasp. The Duke with great justice dreaded the entrance of Blucher into Paris, unchecked by the presence of a government. It was indispensable that Louis XVIII.

should enter his capital, resume the reins of government at once, and stand up as a legitimate authority, whom the Duke might support against revolutionary turbulence, military impatience, or Prussian vindictiveness.

Fouché's colleagues in the commission of government and in the Chamber were weak enough to believe his assertion, that he could obtain guarantees for France and for patriotic interests after the military capitulation had been signed. They sanctioned his repairing to the Duke of Wellington's head-quarters of Neuilly, and subsequently his proceeding to the King's presence, deeming that he went on this errand. And he had drawn up three separate drafts of the guarantees, which he was to require of the King through the English general. When Fouché returned, his secretary asked him which of his drafts had proved most acceptable, and which had been signed. "Fool!" replied Fouché, "do you think I could have presented any one of them to the Duke? Conquerors can do what they please." But although Fouché neither did nor durst demand any written guarantee, he still represented the feelings of the army and of the people as so menacing, that no pains should be spared to conciliate them, if Louis XVIII. was to reign by any other support than that of foreign bayonets. It was arranged by the Duke and by Talleyrand, that Fouché should have a personal interview with the King, who at that time had reached the chateau of Arnouville, near Gonesse. Talleyrand had come to meet Fouché at the Duke of Wellington's quarters: the veterans had dined there together, compared their views and opinions, and found them admirably in accord: they had both begun life in holy orders before the Revolution, and if Talleyrand had sacrificed a mitre to

become an active politician and a man of the world, Fouché had flung off a monk's cowl to be possessed of the same liberty and to follow the same career. The Duke and his friends were convinced that they were of vital service to the royal cause, in thus imposing these two masters of political cunning upon Louis for ministers. They treated Fouché and Talleyrand with profound respect. And yet when they had packed the two rivals and colleagues of half a century in the same carriage to proceed to Arnouville, there was a loud laugh at the probable conversation of these two *innocents*, when they found themselves so strangely *tête-à-tête.**

When Fouché, who in the Convention had voted the death of Louis XVI., found himself in the presence of Louis XVIII., neither could find utterance. Both felt that the meeting between them was unnatural, and would be interpreted in the worst of lights. Talleyrand broke in by observing that he brought to his Majesty's feet one who had just rendered the most valuable services, and who had it in his power to render still greater, in saving him from the intrigues and machinations of his enemies. Louis spoke in flattering terms to Fouché, said he had long determined to retain his services as Police Minister, and asked his advice. On this Fouché enlarged on what he considered the necessary policy to pursue, which was, that the King should adopt France, as well as the interests and personages which had grown up in it, and had served the Emperor. He was to make no distinction between loyalist and revolutionist. All his efforts were to be directed towards the conciliation of his enemies. The King promised vaguely to take all this into his consideration, and Fouché

* Anecdote of General Alava, who was present.

was installed as Minister of Police. To professed politicians it seemed natural and venial that the King should make use for a time of the services of one, who had rendered himself so dangerous and so useful. But professed politicians are apt to forget or to disallow what is nevertheless fact, that parties are quite as often biassed and led by sentiment, as they are by either interest or prudence, and that a breach of decorum is at times more serious than a breach of right. Chateaubriand who had accompanied the King from Ghent, and whose political principles, like those of old feudal and court times, was far more a sentiment than aught else, protested and besought, and even importuned Louis not to appoint a regicide minister. He mocked at even the expediency of the thing, denying altogether the power or existence of that revolutionary party which Fouché was supposed to represent. The Duke of Wellington, however, thought Fouché necessary, and Louis XVIII. had with justice more respect for a word of the Duke, than for all the poetic loyalism of Chateaubriand.

The latter gives an amusing account of Talleyrand's coquetry with the King at Mons, refusing to visit his Majesty, though Louis was setting forth in the morning. The King never pardoned these breaches of etiquette, and insisted on being treated as a monarch in form, however willing to cede real authority and active power as irksome to him. Yet definitively he not only made Talleyrand his Minister, but his Prime Minister, with power over a Cabinet of his own creation; instead of each Minister, as in 1814, being obliged to communicate with the King through M. de Blacas, and be in fact a dependent on the authority and caprice of a chamberlain.

At Arnouville the ministry was completed. Baron Louis resumed the Finance department, and De Jaucourt the Marine. Both were friends and followers of Talleyrand. Fouché recommended M. Molé, one of Napoleon's ministers, for the department of Justice. The King preferred giving him the more subordinate office of *Ponts et chaussées* (Public Works). M. Pasquier was appointed minister of Justice; he had been bred a lawyer, and had filled the office of prefect of Police under Napoleon; and Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr had the War department. Two places in the Cabinet were reserved for the friends of the Emperor Alexander. The Duc de Richelieu, who had been governor of Odessa, but who had quitted the Russian service in 1814, was appointed minister of the household, in lieu of M. de Blacas. The Home department, which was indeed a sinecure whilst Fouché held the Police, was offered to Pozzo di Borgo, who seemed glad to accept it, but who waited the arrival and sanction of Alexander.

Fouché having thus received his appointment as minister and manager of domestic affairs (for the Police was at this time all), returned to what must have been the disagreeable task of informing his colleagues of the Provisional Government, that their authority had ceased to exist, to reconcile them to this extinction; and afterwards communicate the same startling intelligence to the Chamber of Deputies, which so trusted him, and had so lately besought him to treat with Louis XVIII., and procure good conditions for France and for themselves. Fouché had had his interview with Louis XVIII. at St. Denis on the 6th. The Prussians and the English were by the terms of the capitulation to take military possession of Paris on the 7th. And the eagerness of the more enthusiastic Royalists

pressed the King to enter the city on the same day, before the Prussians could relieve the guards, or place their sentinels at the Tuileries. But Fouché objected. He declared the presence of the Prussians necessary to overcome the possible resistance of the Provisional Government or the Chamber. And Louis accordingly consented to defer his own entrance till the 8th. In fact, the Provisional Government held its sittings at the Tuileries, where Fouché convened them on the 7th. They hastened to his call, eager to learn from him the conditions and guarantees for persons and for things, which he had promised to obtain at Arnouville. Fouché immediately began a harangue on the virtues and liberalism of Louis XVIII. and of Wellington; but was interrupted, as he had arranged, by the Prussian soldiers coming to take military possession of the palace, mounting their sentinels at its doors, and rolling their artillery with lighted matches into its courts. At this intrusion, Fouché affected not to be able to contain his indignation. He insisted that it was a breach of the capitulation or convention, and entreated his colleagues to join him in a remonstrance to the Chamber of Deputies. He wrote it forthwith, as follows:—

MONSIEUR LE PRESIDENT,

HITHERTO we were led to believe that the Allied Sovereigns were not unanimous in the choice of the Prince who should rule over France. Our plenipotentiaries assured us so at their return. Nevertheless, the minister and generals of the Allied Powers, declared yesterday in the conference which they had with me, that their Sovereign had taken the engagement to replace Louis XVIII. on the throne, and that to-day or to-morrow he was to make his

public entry into the capital. Foreign troops have just now come to occupy the seat of government at the Tuileries. In this state of things we can only make vows for our country, and, our deliberations being no longer free, we think it our duty to separate.

This address of Fouché in the name of the Government to the Chamber was a complete dissolution of the one, calculated to produce an immediate dissolution of the other. When, however, this letter was read in the Chamber, it passed unanimously to the order of the day, which was then, and had been for the last momentous week, the articles of a Constitution. Manuel bade his colleagues entertain no alarm, for no armed force would violate the majority of a Representative Assembly. The Chamber accordingly continued its debate, and adjourned to the following day. The prefecture of police of the capital had been just entrusted to a young advocate of the vicinity of Bordeaux, who, though once in the employ of the mother of Napoleon, had, like most educated Bordelais, embraced warmly the cause of the Bourbons. This was Monsieur Decazes. He offered to undertake the dissolution of the dreaded Chamber which had dethroned Napoleon; and he accomplished this task by quietly going thither in the evening, locking the doors, carrying away the keys, and leaving a few National Guards on whom he could depend, to signify to the deputies that their hall was closed. M. Decazes did not even employ the Prussians. Such was the end of the Chamber for which Constant had legislated, and in behalf of which Lafayette had defied Napoleon.

Whilst the satellites of the brief Bonapartist reign of 1815 were thus dispersed under the influence and by the

management of Fouché, the Emperor himself, tracked by the same relentless hand, and menaced with being handed over a captive to the Prussians or the Allies in general, was at Rochefort, weighing the different chances of recovery or escape. On the 8th, the very day on which the King made his entrance into Paris, Napoleon embarked to go on board a vessel in the roads, off the Isle d'Aix, which was destined (could they get to sea and escape the English blockade) to conduct him to America. A week after, Napoleon abandoning the project, took the resolve of repairing on board the English vessel, the 'Bellerophon.' The letter, which he addressed to the Prince Regent on the occasion, cannot be omitted from a history of France:

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

STRUCK at by the factions which divide my country, and by the hostility of the great powers of Europe, I have terminated my political career; and I come, like Themistocles, to place myself beside the hearth of the British people. I put myself under the protection of its laws, which I claim from your Royal Highness, as the most powerful, most constant, and most generous of my enemies.

NAPOLEON.

On the 8th of July royal ordonnances were issued, ordering the different functionaries, displaced by the return of Bonaparte, to resume their functions. On the same day Louis XVIII. made his second entry into his capital: this time not merely followed by an escort of Cossacks; posts, streets, bridges, and gardens, were strongly occupied with Prussian soldiery.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISMANAGEMENT OF THE ELECTIONS BY FOUCHÉ AND TALLEYRAND —WORKS OF ART IN THE LOUVRE SEIZED AND RESTORED—DISSOLUTION OF THE ARMY—LISTS OF PROSCRIPTIONS—TRIAL OF LABEDOYÈRE—MURDER OF BRUNE—FOUCHÉ SUPERSEDED BY DECAZES —DISMISSAL OF TALLEYRAND.

THAT the French people should so often, so long, and so tranquilly resign themselves to the assumption of despotic power by their rulers, yet display such impatience under a reign, permitting a certain degree of freedom, has been and remains a source of irremoveable and unabated astonishment. History explains it, unfortunately, by the fact, that a regimen of freedom is always made use of by some extreme and frantic party to enforce vengeance, attempt reaction, and conduct the Government after wild and visionary views, instead of accepting and providing for the wants and wishes of the present. Freedom in France always becomes the rule of faction; whereas absolute power there has been assumed by dictators, and especially by Bonapartist dictators, for the avowed purpose of setting aside, or crushing under foot, extreme factions, allowing the enemies and victims of the lately dominant party to repose in security, and giving to the masses of the industri-

ous the power of pursuing their avocations, undisturbed by the threats and the follies of political maniacs.

Those powers and statesmen who restored Louis XVIII. to his throne in 1814 and in 1815, did not sufficiently take into account that Constitutional Government is the rule of party, and that a sovereign who may not always escape such influence, even when possessed of absolute power, can scarcely hope to abstract himself from it as a Constitutional King. But Representative Government was contemplated in the final results which it had produced in England, where, after a lapse of centuries, and after many periods of agitation and convulsions, political parties had settled down into a kind of sage and serene maturity, where all that was visionary, and all that was sentimental, had been long banished from public life, where every personal and party rancour, together with the profound difference of classes, had, whilst continuing antagonism, learned to combat with blunted arms, and with all the courtesy and moderation of a regulated arena. Alexander saw Constitutional Government in the English mirror. Wellington had never glanced at any other; and neither saw any serious impediment to Louis's enacting the English King, provided he was sufficiently conciliatory to what were considered the prejudices of the majority of the people.

To reconcile Louis XVIII. and his dynasty with that large mass of the population, who had profited by the results, and were proud of the feats of the Revolution, and who gloried in the military triumphs of the Empire, as the consequence and continuance of that Revolution, would under any circumstances have been difficult. It might not, however, in time have been impossible, if Louis XVIII. had, as Fouché recommended, adopted the nation

even to its prejudices, in order that the nation might in turn adopt him. This was difficult to expect of Louis XVIII.; and yet it was not enough, for it was not only necessary that the King should adopt the national party and its prejudices, thereby flinging aside, and turning his back upon the Royalists; but it was necessary that his Government, based on constitutional principles, should be so established, and so conducted, as to make this national party predominant, or at least predominant in proportion to its number, wealth, influence, and position in the country.

But the councillors whom Louis gathered around him, not merely those personal friends of his exile, to whom in 1814 he had entrusted the Government, but those politicians approved for their liberalism, whom he was induced to call to his Cabinet in 1815, were utterly ignorant of the ways, the arts, the necessities, or experience of constitutional Government. Fouché and Talleyrand knew as little of it as those aide-de-camps of the Russian Emperor whom they selected to be their colleagues. Conciliation to the national party was recommended in words, whilst far more flagrant acts were committed, to alienate and affront them. Nor, indeed, was conciliation of any use; for the settlement of the law by which the elections were to take place, and the management of those elections, though intrusted to chiefs of the national and revolutionary party in the Cabinet (that is, to Fouché and to Talleyrand) were so mismanaged by their ignorance and inexperience, that power was allowed, by a strange series of blunders, to become concentrated in the hands of the Royalist and reactionary party. This party who were thus masters of the King, the Government, and the Chambers, forced the

Monarch into a line of policy of which he was never after able to shake off the obloquy, and which placed his dynasty irrevocably at variance with the pride, the sentiments, and the prospects of the nation.

The first essay of constitutional monarchy in France was thus to make it the rule of a faction, which rendered constitutional Government itself far more odious to the French than Absolutism. This might not be altogether the case with the educated classes, who made allowance for circumstances, and who laid the blame of existing evils, not on the constitutional system, but upon the ignorance with which it was perverted. But the greatness of the public did not discern this nicety of distinction. The results which they beheld, and which galled and humiliated them, proceeded from a solemn essay at constitutional monarchy, and, consequently, they shook the public faith in it as well as in the dynasty, and laid the foundation of that worst of maladies in the mind of a great nation—an indifference to its form of Government.

Notwithstanding all the concessions and promises that Louis XVIII. had made, in dismissing such friends as Blacas, and in making Fouché his minister, against the tears and entreaties of the Duchess d'Angoulême, notwithstanding the royal declaration to forgive or forget what he considered the defection of the 20th of March, reserving the vengeance of the law for a few guilty chiefs, Louis XVIII. could not forgive the people of Paris. Little as they were to blame or to praise in a Revolution which had been the act of the army, the citizens having, as Napoleon observed, "allowed him to enter the capital just as they allowed Louis XVIII. to leave it,"—notwithstanding this, the restored monarch regarded Paris and its citizens with

not merely a feeling but a look of indignation. He let down the windows of his carriage, as he entered, to listen to the few adulatory words of the prefect, Chalrol; closed it when the prefect had done, assumed what Lamartine calls a majestic and impassible countenance, refraining from a smile, and decorously as well as wisely refused to assume that paternal blandness which had been employed with so little permanent effect in 1814.

The monarch, indeed, had ample cause for ill-humour and anxiety; for, whilst his courtiers were pouring forth their acclamations of triumph, and their wives indulging in festive dances, to express their exuberant joy at the monarch's return to the palace of his ancestors, his attention was attracted to the Prussian artillery, stationed in its courts, to the British sentinels in the Champs Elysées, to the military camps, which occupied every public edifice and square, whilst his ears were soon assailed with the complaints of the citizens against the exactions of foreign officers. Blucher's was the vindictive spirit. Whilst Wellington kept his troops encamped in the Bois de Boulogne, the Prussian General quartered his soldiers on the inhabitants, and gave orders for their maintenance, in a style far beyond the wants or habits of soldiers. He ordered the muncipality to pay him a contribution of a hundred millions of francs.* He, at the same time, set about mining the foundation of the bridge which faces the Champ de Mars, and which had received the offensive name of the Pont de Jena. The pillar in the Place Vendôme was equally menaced, and the King saw that his entrance into Paris merely led to his being the witness of such indignities. Louis appealed to the Duke of Wellington; nor did he

* Afterwards diminished to 100,000.

show any want of heart or zeal. He remonstrated with Blucher, represented that such acts as these, affecting and exciting a whole population, were like warlike operations, things to be done in concert, and not without consideration, and entreating Blucher to await at least the arrival of the Sovereign, and the sanction, ere he proceeded to mutilate the monuments of the French capital. The vigour of these remonstrances, conveyed in moderate language, checked the destructive zeal of Blucher in this direction; but he was resolved that at least some stigma should be applied in commemoration of the second Bonapartist resistance or campaign. He insisted that all the spoils of art, collected by the French as the harvest of their victories throughout Europe, and treasured in the Louvre, should be restored to their ancient possessors. M. de Talleyrand having refused to entertain such a demand, and M. Denon, the veteran guardian of the *Musée*, resisting it, Blucher occupied the gallery of the Louvre by a battalion, for the purpose of carrying off any works of art, taken from any of the towns at present included in the Prussian monarchy. They were not many; but Belgium and Holland made the same claim for their Rubens and other *chefs d'œuvre*, and Wellington, as commanding their military force, was obliged to support so just a demand. Talleyrand pleaded against such exigencies the terms of the Convention of Paris; but the Duke reminded the Prince, that the first persons who, with want of tact and without necessity mooted this question of the works of art in the Louvre, were the French negotiators of that very Convention. They demanded of Blucher and of Wellington the insertion of a clause in the Convention, declaring the Louvre and its treasures inviolable. The very demand

attracted the attention of Blucher, and it was peremptorily rejected. The restoration of works of art, not originally French property, was thus contemplated by the negotiators of the Convention of Paris, and, as the Prussians enforced it for themselves, Wellington could do no less for the Belgians. He might oppose the blowing up of the Pont d'Jena, but the restoration by the fortune of war of pictures and statutes captured in war was, after all, but justice. Empowered by these opinions, the King of the Low Countries insisted: the Pope and the Italian Powers followed the example, and the Louvre was made to disgorge its trophies.*

If these acts of recrimination and vengeance, just or unjust, were confined to the capital, they would have done less serious injury to the cause of Louis XVIII.; but all France came in a short time to be occupied by foreign armies. The English held the northern provinces, the Prussian the western, the Russians occupied Lorraine and Champagne, of which they invaded the costly cellars.† The Austrians, Piedmontese, Spaniards, Saxons, Bavarians, each assigned themselves a province in which to live at free quarters. Orleans and other towns were shamefully ransomed; in Lorraine and Champagne the peasants rose against the Prussians. Three Prefects, the Baron de Talleyrand, M. Pasquier, and M. Gosville thought their relationship with members of Louis XVIII.'s cabinet would

* It appears from Lord Castlereagh's letter to Lord Liverpool, of July 24th, from Paris ("Castlereagh Correspondence," 3rd series, vol. ii.), that both Castlereagh and Wellington were opposed to the spoliation of the Louvre, which Lord Liverpool and the Prince Regent insisted on. See Lord Liverpool's letter in same collection of July 15.

† Some Cossacks were found drowned in Champagne wine in the cellars of Epernay.

allow them to make remonstrances against the Russian commander. Blucher was informed of these complaints. The only result was, that the three Prefects were arrested, and carried off, and transferred from one Prussian piquet to another, till they found themselves in the heart of Germany. The Prefect of Paris, M. Decazes, was near sharing their fate. These acts were not so flagrant or so cruel, as many committed by the French in the countries which they conquered; but far from such vindictiveness having a salutary effect, it merely fed bad passions and extreme parties, and rendered the pacific government, which it was the interest of Europe to establish in France, doubly difficult.

The arrival of the Emperor Alexander and his influence somewhat moderated the vindictiveness of Blucher, at least compelled him to desist from the most odious of his meditated retaliations. Alexander came in no very good humour. He was no longer the optimist, the sentimental politician, of 1814. Instead of the large and generous, humane, though ill-informed philanthropist, his mind had been invaded by jealousies and piques against all who had thwarted Russian aggrandizement and Russian ideas. To some officers, who at Nancy remonstrated against the imprudence with which the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia were hastening to Paris without large military accompaniment, Alexander replied that their presence was peremptorily required in Paris, where events were taking place of which "they knew little and approved less." If the Restoration of 1814 had been accomplished under the dictation of Russia, the second had been won by the arms, and hastened by the policy, of the Duke of Wellington. Alexander's seemed to be a second part, and he felt it the

more, as England, which had taken the place of Russia as arbiter of French affairs, had signed a treaty with France in February for a defensive alliance against Russia: Alexander had forgotten this in the heat and necessities of war. The war had been concluded without him, and when he now found Lord Castlereagh, who had superseded Wellington as First English Plenipotentiary in Paris, united with Prince Talleyrand, as Prime Minister of France, the Russian Emperor felt his importance lessened, his power and influence attacked.

That the Emperor was not to be conciliated was soon manifest from the refusal of Count Pozzo di Borgo to accept the Home Office, which Talleyrand had destined for him, and of which his acceptance would have been a great error on his part. He was appointed Russian Ambassador in Paris. Neither did the Duc de Richelieu accept the post of Minister of the Household. He pleaded a journey to Odessa, rendered necessary by his private affairs. Thus deprived of that united support of the Sovereign which he enjoyed in 1814, and detested by the Ultra-royalists, who grouped round the Count d'Artois, and who shared all the Duchess of Angoulême's horror of the unfrocked and married Prelate who had served Napoleon, Prince Talleyrand felt the necessity of the support of the national and liberal party. Fouché promised this but gave it not, and indeed was incapable of giving it; the Minister, therefore, felt the necessity of seeking it in the Chambers, and especially in an Assembly of Representatives, to be speedily elected and convened.

One would have thought that politicians so experienced, when reduced to the necessity of leaning upon public opinion, and upon a national parliament, against the treachery

of their own Court, and the secret hostility of the Monarchs of Europe, would have seen the expediency of giving full expression to opinion, and calling a parliament, freely elected by and in harmony with it. But Fouché was incapable of comprehending this. His first act was to stifle public opinion altogether, by a decree forbidding journals to appear without fresh authorization from the police; whilst over these so authorized a Commission of Censorship was appointed. Fouché's colleagues soon perceived the disadvantages of their situation, and they succeeded, not without difficulty, in obtaining an Ordonnance, setting books and pamphlets free of the censorship, which still fettered the journals. The King himself personally resisted this for some time: the horrors of the Revolution were in his mind bound up with pamphlets and the press, nor could all the eloquence of Chateaubriand persuade him that the monarchy could be safe, if the scourge of criticism was freely applied to it.

The mode in which the election to the Chamber was to take place was considered and discussed in the same ignorant and narrow spirit. The safety of the monarchy, the independence, and even the integrity of the country, with the liberal and moderate policy which Ministers chose to fetter, could only be maintained by the reality of constitutional government and the honest application of its principles; but even the liberals of the day dreaded to apply more than mock representation. The true answer then, as since, to the reproach that all attempts at Constitutional Government failed in France, is the simple truth that the representative or the constitutional principle was never applied.

The electoral system, invented towards the close of the Republic, and adopted under the Empire with modifica-

tion, has been explained. The people of each canton chose their notables as fittest to fill cantonal functions. These chose the notables of districts, fit to fill district offices, and these again the department notables worthy of higher functions. This in its very origin was the election, not of men to represent interests, but of men to fill different places. It was an election of functionaries or candidate functionaries. This vitiated the very principle of representation. The man chosen to be a notable or member of an electoral college was thereby designated to the Government as a candidate functionary, a man desirous of place, and henceforth having no means of obtaining his desire but by pleasing the Government. Electoral colleges, consisting of such men, and such a class of men, had but one aim in returning deputies, that of pleasing the party in possession of power, and having the gift of place. They were just as ready to return Bonapartists one day as Bourbonists the next. Such a thing as independent opinion, local interests, genuine representation, was unknown. With ever so much freedom given to such elections, they never could have resulted in anything else than a representation of the functionary class.

What is the influence or hold of any party or Ministry over such a class? None whatever, except in proportion to its amount of authority and chances of duration! A Ministry, strong in the affections of the Court, and in all higher influence, would command the adherence of the functionary party; but that is the Ministry precisely which needs no such support. What Talleyrand and Pasquier wanted was a Chamber and a body of independent and intelligent men, representing popular opinion and powerful interests to support them in a liberal policy

against Bourbon caprice, ultra-royalist reaction, and the exigences of foreign power. They could only find this in a genuine national representation. But they feared this. And they wanted to seek support in a Chamber to be elected by bodies of notables and candidate functionaries.

Even Napoleon had shown himself more liberal and bold. He, indeed, made use of the old Electoral Colleges to choose the members of the Hundred Days; but he called on the Electoral Colleges of the district in the small towns to return members, as well as the Electoral Colleges of the department. The distinction between these two bodies and kinds of electors, it is important to mark, for upon it turned the future struggles and triumphs of parties. It was Napoleon in the Hundred Days who established these district elections, which formed the chief support of the liberal party. Napoleon tried to arrange also that commercial interests and classes should have members of their own. But with all their exclamations against imperial tyranny, with all their pretended love of Constitutionalism and desire to resist ultra-royalist retrograde policy, Talleyrand and Pasquier did not promulgate an electoral law so liberal as that of Napoleon. They ordained that primary elections should not take place; that the present list of district elections should remain; that those upon it should choose a new list of notables or men whom they recommended; and that out of them the old Departmental Colleges should choose the members of the ensuing Chamber.

Lamartine and other royalist writers represent the elections of 1815 as the result of the disgust of the entire French population with the conduct of Napoleon, and with the evils, outrages, and oppressions which his ill-advised return had imposed upon the country. This is

neither true nor just. A certain portion of the peasant population, in certain districts of the south and west, may have been actuated in 1815 by strong antipathy to Bonapartism; but the oppression of foreign armies, which then weighed upon the soil and upon the population, was very far from inspiring the latter with love for the Bourbons, or with trust in the Royalists. The sentiment of the nation in 1815 was the same as that which it has since evinced. In the elections of 1815, the French people were not consulted. The elections were abandoned to the Electoral Colleges, consisting in all of about 20,000 individuals. Each of these colleges was presided over at the moment of election by a prince or some royalist chief of known authority and eminence; and each Electoral College, composed as we have seen of candidate functionaries, of men following the profession of place, were eager to pay court to its loyalist president, by returning, as indeed was their habit on all occasions, such deputies as were acceptable to the great chiefs and centre of authority in Paris.

Had the Ministry felt itself strong and shown itself adroit, such a man as Fouché might have appointed prefects in his interest, and afforded these agents the means of securing the return of candidates to be relied upon. But in truth ministers had no partizans or party. There existed throughout the country none save Bonapartists or Royalists. Such men as Lafayette and his three or four friends, mistrusting alike the tyranny of Napoleon and of the ultra-Royalists, were solitary specimens of a middle party. Even moderate Royalism was not as yet professed or understood; and no wonder that the country was politically ignorant, when even Fouché

and Talleyrand were, as ministers, equally so. The former reposed in the confidence that the members of Napoleon's Electoral Colleges would return men of no party like himself. He therefore gave no order, proposed no candidate, took no precautions. The Ministry had even allowed its power to be superseded. The Duc d'Angoulême had gone upon a journey through the south, and he had everywhere appointed prefects, and exercised all the power of the Home Minister as well as the Ministers of Justice. And of course he nominated none save furious Royalists. The Cabinet sought to alter these appointments and to substitute more moderate men. Each change was considered an affront upon the Duc d'Angoulême, and led to altercations with Monsieur. Talleyrand declared he could not govern, if the King's brother at every step overruled the minister and disputed with him the influence over the provinces. The result of such weakness and anarchy in the Government was, that each Electoral College, every local interest and ambition took to Royalism as the star in the ascendant. No one thought of the Ministry—every one thought of the Court. Of course the Chamber chosen under such influence was one of frantic Royalism. Thus it was that Fouché succeeded in guaranteeing and saving revolutionary interests. His ignorance (Talleyrand's) of what a constitution meant, or of what constitutional election required, handed over the lives, properties, liberties, the most cherished desires, interests and sentiments of nine-tenths of the population of France to about one-tenth, to a class of squires, emigrants, and courtiers, who, set aside by former governments, now rushed, greedy, impatient, ignorant, and vindictive, to monopolize place and proscribe every competition.

There was a shout of derision, when in 1848 a republican Minister, in a circular to the electors of France, informed them that learning and experience were not necessary to a Minister of the Legislature, and that good intention and firm principles were more recommendable qualities. Precisely the same doctrines were preached in 1815, even by the more intellectual Royalists. "Let us begin," said a writer of that time in the *Journal des Debats*, "by putting aside all candidates of too much cleverness or experience, all these men acquainted with the tactics or science of public assemblies. Let us get rid of these *inviolables* that have hitherto been the choice of their constituents. Break this monopoly. Let the new assembly shine above all by the youth of its members." The advice was strictly followed. Scarcely a single man of those who had a name or experience in politics, even of those who had rallied to the King, as the best hope of moderate and constitutional liberty, was nominated.

Ignorant and unskilled as the President of the Council, Prince Talleyrand, might be of the tactics requisite to put together and manage a Chamber of Deputies, he had quickness and foresight to perceive that his colleagues knew not what they were about, that the elections were mismanaged, and that the future Chamber was likely to prove an assembly in which he, Talleyrand, could exercise little influence. Recurring, however, to his great model, the English Constitution, the Prime Minister recollected that whilst some Ministers of a British Cabinet maintained their position and importance by their influence in the Commons, others based their power and importance upon their ascendancy in the House of Lords. Talleyrand thought, that, in the constitutional Government about to

be invoked, he would be the French Minister in the Chamber of Peers. He therefore resolved to make himself at once the father of that Senate, and entitle himself to their eternal gratitude, by issuing an ordonnance for the hereditary right of the peerage. Napoleon had ordered this in his Additional Act, to show that he could do more for even the aristocracy than the Bourbons. It was a portion of Napoleon's charter which was recommended for adoption, and that even Chateaubriand approved. Talleyrand therefore insisted upon an ordonnance, declaring the Peerage hereditary. Louis XVIII. objected. He would have preferred a certain proportion of Peers for life in the Upper Chamber, in order to strengthen the royal authority. But Talleyrand had in view to establish his own authority; and he had the support of Monsieur and the ultra-Royalists from their own motives in favour of his scheme. At the same time such of the members of the Chamber of Peers of 1814 as had shown zeal for Napoleon were removed from the list, others were added of the more recently remarkable, Chateaubriand of the number. Each Prince and Princess, and Talleyrand himself, included their friends and favourites. The Count d'Artois nominated the Polignacs and the Montmorencies, the King the Blacases and the Davarays. M. Pasquier inserted the names of the chiefs of the great legist and monied families. Louis XVIII. objected to the name of Molé, and erased it, as a servitor of Bonaparte. "Will your Majesty be good enough to insert again that name?" observed Talleyrand. "I ask it for the memory of Matthew Molé."

In this establishment and aggrandizement of the Chamber of Peers, Prince Talleyrand was just as far from attaining

his aim, as Fouché was in his confidence that the electoral colleges of Napoleon would return a Chamber of Representatives respectful of revolutionary names and things. Based upon no interest, without traditional ideas, with no influence in the country, and having strength to seek rather than to give, the Chamber of Peers proved of no support whatever to Talleyrand, and showed him no gratitude of any kind; for the colour and tendencies of the new Chamber of Deputies were no sooner known than the first tendencies of the new House of Peers were to make common cause with them, and to vie with the Deputies in all the zeal and extravagance of ultra-royalism.

Whilst the Talleyrand and Fouché ministry was thus digging its own grave, by the manner in which it ordered and regulated the critical operation of the first parliamentary elections; they were equally, however reluctantly, active to sacrifice the interest and wound the pride of that national and revolutionary party which, under the advice of Wellington, and indeed of Alexander, they had at first been appointed to conciliate. Strange to say, it was the sovereigns and foreign statesmen themselves, those who most stickled for the necessities of moderate liberalism, who drove Talleyrand into acts, each and all of which sunk a gulf between the Bourbons and the nation.

One of the first demands of the Allies was the dissolution of the army. It would have been wise in 1814. It was useless vengeance now; for without chance or prospect of serving any other cause or dynasty than the Bourbon, the army might have rallied to them. However, the decree was issued for breaking up the army of the Loire, and drafting a certain number of the men into provincial regiments. Marshal Macdonald undertook this task.

Another exigency of the Allies was the punishment of those most conspicuous in aiding the return of Napoleon, and putting Europe to such anxiety and such expense. The Royalists clamoured aloud for what foreign statesmen advised as requisite to avenge the dignity and cement the power of the restored dynasty. Talleyrand himself was averse to vengeance, and, above all, to blood. Fouché was equally so. One of his first cares had been to draw up a note or memoir, to be laid before the different plenipotentiares, respecting the idea which generally prevailed in their camps, and which the Royalists accredited, that the resuscitation of the Empire had been the result of a conspiracy. Bonaparte, said Fouché, required no other facilities or preparation for his return, than the state of weakness and disaffection which the Government of 1814 universally created. That Government was as much to blame in having left the country so inflammable, so open to Bonapartist invasion, as French soldiers and civilians were in having lent themselves to a resuscitation of the Empire. The whole country was guilty of disaffection, said Fouché, and you cannot place it on the benches of a court of justice: none were guilty of conspiracy. Such arguments made no impression; and Fouché, seeing that a list of proscriptions was expected, and was inevitable, drew up a large one, comprising almost all who had served Napoleon, including Caulaincourt, the friend of Alexander, with Lanjuinais and Flauguerques, who were Constitutionalists. Fouché could have drawn up such a list solely with a view to defeat, and render it inexecutable. Louis XVIII. himself blushed when he observed the name of Benjamin Constant, which he instantly erased. The *Moniteur* of July 25th contained a double list of those

marked out for vengeance. The first, containing the names of those who were to be tried before court-martial, and whose doom was manifestly death, were Ney, Labedoyère, the two Lallements, Drouet d'Erlon, Lefebvre Desnonettes, Asneil, Brayer, Gilly, Monton Duvernet, Grouchy, Clausel, Laborde, Debelle, Bertrand, Drouet, Cambronne, Lavalette, and Rovigo.

This was followed by another list of persons, counting thirty-eight, of whom the best known are Soult, Bassano, Excelmans, Boulay de la Meurthe, Carnot, Thibeaudeau, Vandamme, Lamarque, Lobau, Arnault, Regnault, Arrighi, Real. These were ordered to withdraw from Paris, and remain in such place as the Police Minister should indicate, until they were either brought to trial or ordered definitively to quit the kingdom.

In consequence of this ordonnance, Carnot, late member of the Provisional Government, waited upon his former colleague, Fouché, to ask, as Minister of Police, to what part of France he should withdraw.

"Where do you wish me to go, traitor?" asked Carnot of Fouché.

"*Où tu veux, imbecile*"—Where you choose, idiot," was Fouché's reply.

Whatever his recklessness of conduct and of principle, Fouché ardently desired that the blood of none should be spilled. He gave passports readily, and every means of escape, to those especially who were on the first list, with advice to quit the kingdom without delay. But none of the victims could believe that for a crime in which they participated with the whole nation, or at least with the whole army, and which circumstances, not they, had precipitated, they were to undergo the death of malefactors. Lavalette and

Labedoyère each counselled the other to escape. But neither took the fit and seasonable steps requisite. Labedoyère joined the army of the Loire, where he and Excelmans, also proscribed, along with Count Flahault, were in no great difficulty of avoiding capture. Labedoyère would, however, go to Paris to bid adieu to his wife, not long confined. He chanced to travel in the diligence with an agent of police, and was arrested as soon as he arrived. He was in a few days brought before a court-martial. The Court was naturally much incensed against Labedoyère. One of the Peers of the *Cent Jours*, of good family, and well connected (his wife had been Madlle. De Chastellux), Labedoyère had been chosen for his noble name by the ministers of the Restoration, and appointed, though but twenty-eight years of age, colonel of a regiment. Accepting that command with the white flag, he had set the example at Grenoble, marching forth with his regiment to replace the white flag with the Imperial eagle, and forthwith to join the Emperor. Labedoyère had no excuse to offer save that he was *entrainé*, carried away. He avowed that in common with the nation he had welcomed the Bourbons in 1814, and in common with the nation had abandoned them in 1815, which assuredly was not his fault or the nation's, but ——. The Military President here interrupted the accused with the strange remark, "That no court of justice could inquire into motives. Justice had nothing to do with motives, because," added the learned President, "no crime can be innocent." Labedoyére was condemned to death. His mother and his wife, of a Royalist family, known herself for Royalist predilections, succeeded in throwing themselves at the King's feet. But the monarch was inexorable. Labe-

doyère underwent his sentence on the 19th of August in the plain of Grenelle.

The fate of Labedoyère had just been sealed when Marshal Ney was brought to Paris a prisoner, and his trial, as well as that of Count Lavalette, ordered to take place. Those trials were so timed as to form the chief objects of public interest during the concluding months of 1815. The trial of Labedoyère took place about the time of the elections; the others followed during the sitting of the Chambers, threw the debates of these, as well as even ministerial changes, into the shade, occupied the minds, and inflamed the conflicting sentiments of the French, and left the melancholy impression that Constitutional Government itself was the instrument of a vindictive party.

But before the fate of these eminent and brave, but certainly culpable men, came to close the year's tragedy in Paris, more fearful, though more obscure acts of vengeance, were perpetrated in the south, and shed upon the return of the Bourbons that "baptism of blood," never to be forgotten by the educated classes and the Protestant families of Nismes, and of those beautiful towns and regions which look down upon the Mediterranean shore. In that part of France the population is still, as it was then, divided into two hostile parties. It had sympathised far less with the struggles and the glories of war than the population of the north and east. The subjugation of the Low Countries by the Republic, and of Germany by the Emperor, had had an immense effect, material as well as moral, upon the provinces bordering upon these countries. The south of France found by no means equal openings, equal profit, equal glory. The great cities of the region being sea-

ports, its great produce being objects of exportation; nothing could repay the closing of the ocean against Bordeaux and Marseilles. Remote from the seat of Empire, with less instruction and less military ardour than in the north, the southern had not profited so much as the northern by either the Revolution or the Empire. It remained jealous, dissatisfied. Its priesthood retained or regained their influence, and the Restoration was accordingly hailed in these provinces as a new and hopeful era. It was especially amongst the small gentry and the very poor that these hopes germed; and when the Duc d'Angoulême traversed the south he was joined by bands of volunteer Royalists, consisting of the very dregs of the population, officered by men who pretended to revere the old distinction of birth; but against these enthusiastic Royalists were arrayed the civic and the middle class, at least, in Provence, and in this class were included at Nismes, and the neighbouring towns, the large Protestant population. These, who had already felt in 1814 the results of Royalist reaction, had hailed the return of Napoleon with imprudent gladness.

The first tidings of Waterloo awoke their enemies to vengeance. The volunteer Royalist, who had been defeated and compelled to surrender with the Duc d'Angoulême, had suffered evil treatment and hardship. Their turn for triumph now came, and the first news of Bonaparte's second fall excited almost an instant insurrection in the population of Marseilles. The *bonnet rouge* is indigenous there, and first marked the workmen of the port. The passion, originally linked with the *bonnet rouge*, was not love or hate of Republic or King; it was the hatred of the poor against the rich, of the brute against the civilized

man, of the fanatic against the educated. This same sentiment, which animated the *sans culottes* of 1791 to hang up the Royalists of Paris to the lamp-posts, animated another generation of the same men to massacre the Bonapartists of 1815. Their crime was holding place and being well to do. There were at the time few troops at Marseilles, and General Verdier, who commanded, drew them off to Toulon. The Marseilles mob immediately proceeded to their favourite task of massacre. The first victims were a knot of Mamelukes and Egyptians, who had followed the French from their great expedition, and who had been allowed a refuge and afforded sustenance in one of the suburbs of Marseilles. The mob instantly murdered these poor creatures, their women, and their children, pursuing the fugitives with relentless aim into the sea. They then proceeded to breathe vengeance on such of their fellow-citizens as were suspected, or known to be in Imperialist employment, or of Bonapartist predilections. From these indulgences they passed to the pillage of shops, and the murder of their owners. At last the townsfolk took to arms, and succeeded, not without bloodshed, in protecting themselves and their property.

Marshal Brune had commanded in the south for Napoleon, his task being with 7,000 men to keep the Royalists quiet, and repel attempts at invasion or insurrection. The Marshal did not hesitate to resign his command to the Marquis de la Rivière, whom the Royalist Government sent down to supersede him. The military duty which he had performed in the south of course exposed Brune to calumny. One of the stories invented to blacken him represented the Marshal as the man who, during the Revolution, held on a pike the head of the Princess de

Lamballe. 'When he set out for Paris now, the rumour was that he was going to the army behind the Loire, and was to return to invade the south. These rumours preceded Brune at Aix and at Avignon, and he no sooner reached the hotel of the latter town, on the 2nd of August, than a crowd of the porters and workmen of Avignon, worthy brethren of those of Marseilles, collected before the gates. The National Guard of Avignon, with its officers, and the Mayor and authorities, aware of the seriousness of the menaces, hastened to take post before the hotel. The carriage of the Marshal was several times brought out, but it was found impossible to make way through the mob. The people formed a regular siege of the hotel, and the authorities stood on a regular defence, exposing their lives and repelling every attempt to enter by breaking in door or gates. In the midst of this prolonged contest the shouts of the spectators, posted at adjoining windows, told that the enemy had discovered a mode of entrance, and some daring ruffians had got over the roofs of the neighbouring houses into the hotel. That fact was no sooner discovered than the report of some shots told the success of the ruffians in the perpetration of their crime. They penetrated into the chamber of Brune and shot him. Not content with a murder which all had not joined in, the mob awaited till the body was placed in its coffin, and brought forth to be deposited in the church previous to burial. They seized the coffin, tore the dead body from it, and in a procession of frenzy and triumph, bore it to the Rhone, and precipitated it into the stream. Thrown by the rapidity of the current several times upon the bank, no one durst show any respect to the remains, and it was only when cast on one of the desert islands, near the mouth of the Rhone, that

an old soldier, who had served under Brune, dared, in secrecy to make a grave for his remains.

Whilst Avignon and Marseilles thus perpetrated, in the name of the restored Bourbons, massacres of equal atrocity with those in which the Marseillais took so large a share at the commencement of the Revolution, Nismes was able to surpass them and the Revolution itself in deeds of intolerance and blood. One of the laws which the government of Napoleon had strictly enforced was, to prevent the clergy of any religion from forming processions, or celebrating ceremonies out of doors, especially in districts where there prevailed more than one profession of faith. The Catholics of Nismes, and of the south in general, considered themselves wronged by a law which enclosed their worship and religious *fêtes* within walls, and assimilated them to the Protestants. Religious hatred had not a much deeper cause. When, therefore, the troops were withdrawn, and the people of Nismes were without guard or control, some ruffians made a pretext of religious zeal to institute processions returning thanks for the fall of the Bonapartists. The Protestants of the region, generally, were grateful to Napoleon for the protection he afforded them, and for the equality he established, and were, therefore, confounded with the Bonapartists. They were, moreover, industrious and rich, and thus became tempting objects of pillage.

As in our day, the ruffians of the south of France styled themselves Communists, and marched under this political pretence (which they were incapable of comprehending), against any class which offered plunder, so in 1815 these robbers affected to be ultra-Catholics, and made religious zeal an excuse for victimizing the Protestants. The fault

of the more respectable Catholics was not to have risen and united to put down the ruffians; but these, unfortunately, met with the most complete success and impunity. Led by a fellow named Trestaillons, they committed unheard-of atrocities, breaking into the Protestant temples, and reproducing one of the fearful scenes of the Paris revolution, by stripping and flogging publicly Protestant females of all ages, caught frequenting their temples. The citizens and working classes generally joined in the persecution; and the Protestants, with their females, were literally hunted and slaughtered like wolves, in a popular and wealthy district of France, and as the inauguration of a Bourbon reign. At Uzes, a town not far from Nismes, the massacre of Protestants assumed still more the old revolutionary aspect. They were brought out in couples to the market-place, and shot. This disgraceful state of things lasted nearly two months; at one period of which the elections took place. It is needless to ask what became of the Protestants or their interests at such a time. Fouché and Talleyrand were Ministers; but they had been compelled by the Allied Powers to disband the army, and the consequence was, such massacres as these; nor was it until the nomination of the Duc de Richelieu to be Minister, that the Duc d'Angoulême thought fit to interfere, and to make a personal visit to Nismes. His Royal Highness ordered the Protestant churches to be reopened. The result was, of course, the assembling of Trestaillons' mob to prevent the worship, and to murder the congregation. General Lagarde mustered what soldiers were under his command, to uphold the order of tolerance; but the soldiers were attacked, and the general himself slain at the head of his troops. Will it be be-

lieved as an event of the nineteenth century, that the perpetrator of this murder, a man named Boivins, was acquitted by a jury of the citizens of Nismes, although he confessed the act! and that Trestaillons, being the murderer of hundreds of innocent persons, was also absolved, and no punishment whatever inflicted by the Bourbon Government for atrocities greater than ever disgraced the most savage nation! The horror excited in our minds by the atrocities of Robespierre and Danton is greatly owing to the idea that they were unique, and that republican frenzy could only produce them; but royalist frenzy did fully equal these in 1815. Trestaillons Truphemie committed no less atrocities upon French Protestants; and though the Duc d'Angoulême so soon after visited the spot, and inquired into the facts, such deeds remained unpunished, and indeed unknown, for the journals were refused permission even to allude to them; and when Voyer d'Argenson in the Chamber of Deputies, dared to do so, his voice was drowned by the cries of the royalist majority, which considered that not prevention or punishment, but impunity and oblivion, should be applied to such crimes. The Chamber actually compelled their President to call M. Voyer d'Argenson to order, for having dared even to allude to such facts.

The royalist infamies of 1815 were indeed too numerous to be all described; they would monopolise the page of history. The executions and massacres of the Revolution are painted by the historian because they were links in the chain of the great events which led from liberty to licence and to anarchy, and from thence again to tyranny. The sanguinary atrocities of 1815 are not so prominent, or so fraught with great results, but they are

as damning to a cause, a nation, and a reign; and the *Terror* of the South in the autumn of 1815, in every way equalled the so-much more talked of *Terror* of 1793. Nor were these atrocities confined to Marseilles, Avignon, and Nismes—Toulouse had its victim in General Ramel, also assassinated; whilst the fate of the brothers Faucher at La Reole, is in itself a romance of such nobleness and heroism on their part, and of such base cruelty, cowardice, and guilt on the part of the royalist authorities who put them to death, as, in conjunction with simultaneous and similar crimes in other towns, to stamp upon the restored royalty of the Bourbons and their cause that same stigma of guilt which branded the first Revolution, and doomed it to descend from one act of insanity and imbecility to another, till the cause, the name, and the men, were driven from power and public existence with a contumely and disgrace from which none could ever hope to revive.

The trials and executions in Paris, accompanied by these acts of far greater cruelty, and far less justice in the provinces, beset the mind of Fouché with misgivings, not of the justice, or the charity of such proceedings, but of the impossibility of building political or ministerial power on such foundations. It was idle to complain to his colleague, Talleyrand, or to state his fears in Council. Fouché preferred drawing up his views of policy in State papers, able documents, full of manly frankness, of truth, and even of liberalism. These he was in the habit of laying before Napoleon. He now drew up his opinions of the state of the country, to lay before Louis XVIII. Fouché drew a true and terrible picture of the way in which the two factions, revolutionary and royalist, were drawn up one against the other; this side triumphant and full of revenge

for the moment, but sure to be met, sooner or later, by conspiracy and rebellion on the part of the other. "The Royalists," said Fouché, "may be the more numerous in some departments, and parties may be balanced in others, but those attached to the Revolution, to its glories, and that of the Empire, form the large majority, when the whole country is taken into consideration." Such expostulations, urging that more forbearance should be shown to the party of the Revolution, although it was the very principle on which Fouché had taken office, and been appointed to it, were now unpalateable to the King, who grew impatient to be rid of such a monitor.

His Majesty had procured what he altogether wanted, on entering France, a friend and bosom councillor, who, though young and docile, still appeared to Louis to possess all the address, experience, and sagacity requisite to be minister, or to make ministers. M. Decazes was this favourite. Of handsome person, fluent speech, agreeable manners, the new Prefect of Police had acted as Minister of Police to the King, bringing him reports, news, informing and consulting his Majesty upon a host of subjects, whilst the ostensible Minister, Fouché, partly absorbed in his marriage with a young and noble wife, partly in considerations of policy far above his ostensible office, abandoned such small and unimportant matters to his subordinates: the King had thus a Police Minister in readiness to supplant Fouché. The report of the latter had even annoyed his colleague, Talleyrand, and annoyed him more because it had crept into publicity. Fouché was irritated at the extravagant demands of the Allied Sovereigns and their ministers, and he did not shrink from attacking them. "The Allies," Fouché said, "accuse us

of servility to Napoleon, and threaten to punish France for having been the accomplice of his tyranny. But it was not so much the French that made Napoleon the general autocrat and despoiler of the territories and liberties—it was the Sovereigns of Europe themselves who upheld him, who flattered him, who shared in his conquests and countenanced all that he did." This was too insolent, because it was too true; and there ensued a general conspiracy against Fouché, in which King, Allies, Talleyrand, and Decazes joined. The Royalists of the new Chamber about to open were, of course, equally ready to cast a stone. M. Lainé, consulted as to the spirit of the members, declared their predominant feeling was hatred of Revolutionists like Fouché. He could not outlive so many enemies; and Talleyrand undertook to convey to the colleague whom he had helped to force upon the King three months previous, that his services were henceforth to be dispensed with. Talleyrand seized an opportunity of expatiating to the Duc d'Otrante on the happiness of a life spent in America, afar from the factious turmoils of men and things in France. Fouché asked, by interrogatory looks, to what such an exordium might lead? when Talleyrand confessed that it was in Fouché's power to take the post of French Ambassador at Washington. "Is it then decided that I am to be got rid of?" was Fouché's indignant inquiry. "Have I become disagreeable to the King?" He soon found that he was so; but preferring not to quit Europe, he accepted the post of French envoy at the Court of Dresden. It was but an excuse to obtain his removal from France; for no sooner had he reached Dresden than he was dismissed from even that diplomatic post, and bade, under pain of displeasure, to place himself under the sur-

veillance of the Austrian police, by selecting Linz for his place of residence. Such was the fall of Fouché, struck down by a party to which he had sacrificed all others, and which was anxious to wipe off the stain of having ever employed him.

Fouché was not the only dupe of the belief that political experience was indispensable under the new King; Talleyrand had no sooner tripped up his revolutionary colleague, than a similar blow of retribution was dealt to himself. The most difficult task of the restored Government was to satisfy the new exigencies of foreign Powers. From the first, Wellington had conceived a dread of these exigencies, and, in order to obviate them, had precipitated Louis XVIII. to reascend his throne, and to reappoint his able and not illiberal Ministers. But the Allies not the less pressed their invasion, and occupied the whole country with their armies, whilst the remnant of those bands which had fought under Napoleon at Waterloo was, by their orders, broken up. The Sovereigns then met to consider what pledges they should take, what demands insist on. But it was no longer a Congress to which Talleyrand could force his way, combine votes, and raise discussions; the door was closed against the French Minister, and the most outrageous proposals were made for partitioning or curtailing France.

The only great power, indeed, that was zealously and inveterately bent on reducing the French monarchy to the territories which it possessed at Louis XIV.'s accession, was Prussia. The statesmen of Berlin bore in mind not merely the battle of Ligny and its possible consequences, but the fact that it was the opposition of France which had prevented their Sovereign from obtaining all of

Saxony: Talleyrand, at Vienna, had shorn Prussia of Dresden and of Leipzig. The time for retaliation was come; and Hardenberg and Humboldt now insisted on adding Artois and French Flanders to the new kingdom of the Low Countries, give Savoy to Sardinia, Franche Comté and Alsace to the German Powers; whilst Prussia and Austria should possess territories side by side in Champagne and Lorraine.

The Ministers of the smaller powers, which were to profit by this partition of France, of course approved of and abetted it. Wellington observed, that it was useless to give such a number of first-rate fortresses to a government like that of the Low Countries, which did not possess an army to man or to defend them. Prussia had thrown out as a bait to Austria the erection of Lorraine into a Duchy for an Austrian Archduke. All proposals of this kind were highly popular in Germany: Prussia, by insisting on them, came forward as the champion of German interests, the restorer of German greatness. Austria therefore durst not oppose, although the project of aggrandizing Prussia and the Low Countries, as well as the minor states of the Confederacy, by no means suited the policy of Vienna; Metternich, therefore, apparently joined in the scheme, by representing that France possessed three lines of fortresses, of which it might at least cede one line, indicating Landau, and implying Strasburg, as places to be given up. The cession of such large fortresses would have necessitated their being garrisoned by the troops of the Great Powers, or of the Confederation, thus avoiding the aggrandizement of the smaller provinces. The scheme, however, was fundamentally unwise. It was an amount of humiliation and provocation to the French, against which their national pride

would infallibly take the first opportunity of rebelling, whilst the districts taken from France fell into the hands of no powers able to keep them. How were the smaller powers of Germany to retain territories divided from them by the Rhine? How were the war-offices o Vienna and Berlin to maintain outposts within a few marches of Paris, in the midst of the most warlike provinces of modern France? The English Parliament would never sanction a Minister in policy so imprudent and so extravagant. Russia, too, having already secured Poland, saw no gain for itself in allowing the new German Confederation to extend so far westward of the Rhine. An Austrian Archduke in Lorraine was not what Russian armies had marched into that province to accomplish; so that as early as the 18th of July, Comte Capo d'Istrias, in the name of Alexander, sent in a written declaration that the Sovereigns had taken up arms against the Emperor Napoleon and his adherents, not against France, and that therefore no right of conquest could exist as the result of victory. The maintenance of the Treaty of Paris had been the aim of the war, and if the stipulations of that Treaty were set aside, as well as those of Vienna, and a complete reconstruction of the different States of Europe undertaken, there was no possibility of seeing the issue of such a settlement, or to what difficulties and dangers the rearrangements might give rise. Comte Capo d'Istrias recommended the Allies to come to the aid of the legitimate King of France, instead of exciting the same distrust of him as of Napoleon; the best guarantee of peace, and the best security of the new territorial settlement, being the strength and success of the government which the Bourbon family had established, and which it was labouring to consolidate. Lord Castlereagh had given

his opinion to the same effect, and the Duke of Wellington, replying to the Austrian demand of a line of fortresses, said, that France might be compelled to pay the price of erecting a new line of fortresses, instead of dispossessing the King of those French towns which had belonged to the monarchy for two centuries.

The result of these discussions between Austria and Prussia on one side, Russia and England on the other, was an agreement to make certain demands upon France, which were drawn up, and called an *ultimatum*. This project altered the line of frontier, drawn on the north-east of France in 1814, making a new line, which would place the towns and districts of Condé, Philippeville, Marienburg, and Givet in Belgium, not in France; whilst Landau and Sarre Louis should be also ceded. Savoy was given up to Sardinia: eight hundred million of francs were to be paid to the Allies, whose troops were to occupy the French fortresses for a period of seven years.

The loss of Savoy and of Landau, the large sums to be paid, and the occupation of seven years, were conditions which, however lighter than those lately menaced, still affected Louis XVIII.

Talleyrand made the best reply that he could to such demands: he reminded the Powers, as indeed Capo d'Istrias had done, that they had come forward as foes to Napoleon, not to France, and that they had no claim to make conquests. His Majesty, however, was prepared to give up whatever in 1814 had been added to the ancient limits of France. This implied that the fortress of Landau, a possession of the old monarchy, was not to be given up. The Minister was also ready to admit the principle of pecuniary indemnity and of military occupation; but to the amount

and the time he objected. The rejoinder of the Allies was short. It declared they would not be satisfied in 1815 with what contented them in 1814. The cessions demanded were trifling, they said, and still left France compact and powerful. As to the ancient limits of the monarchy, the Powers protested against limits, either ancient or modern, being considered fixed and inviolable—a strange assertion of mutability for five great Powers, met to fix the demarcations of Europe—and concluded by insisting on their *ultimatum.*

Such serious demands, with the arguments which he could alone use to rebut them, were of course made known by Prince Talleyrand to the King; and they were necessarily accompanied by the avowal that he despaired of obtaining better terms. It had been already hinted to Louis XVIII., that better terms might be obtained through the instrumentality of Russia, if the King would dismiss M. de Talleyrand. The Czar had not forgiven him his conduct at Vienna, and in his interviews with Louis, did not conceal his dislike of the Prince. The Czar's friend and aid-de-camp, M. de Richelieu, refused to take even the office of Minister of the Household so long as Talleyrand held office. In fact, Russia demanded his dismissal. It might have been expected that, knowing the cause of Alexander's enmity, the Austrian and English Plenipotentiaries would have supported Talleyrand. The Duke of Wellington would probably have done so; but Lord Castlereagh had now the lead, and neither he nor Metternich cared whether a French Minister had liberal and constitutional leanings or not. They left Talleyrand to his fate, and abandoned the influence over the French Government to Russia.

To have supported Talleyrand would indeed have been a difficult matter, for the Prince had failed in providing the only solid foundation for a Constitutional Minister's power. He had allowed the elections to go against him, and a Chamber to be returned, the majority of which was completely in the interests and ideas of the Comte d'Artois and the ultra-Royalists. Thus powerless to negotiate with the Allies, or to command a majority amongst the Deputies, Talleyrand is said, as a forlorn hope, to have made an appeal to the King, and to have demanded of him some signal mark of favour to himself, and of punishment to the Comte d'Artois, which would have protected the Ministry, and covered it by the Majesty of the Throne.

It was an unreasonable request. Talleyrand had arrived at the natural term of his ministerial existence, and should have seen the necessity of withdrawing. Instead of this, he summoned the laziest and most timid of monarchs to come forward and save a Minister whom the majority disliked personally, and whom he had employed merely in the belief of his political influence. The peer hinted that, without the mark of royal support which he demanded, the ministry must resign.

"Be it so," said Louis XVIII.: "I will appoint others. But you can stay in France, M. de Talleyrand," added the monarch, graciously abrogating in his minister's favour the rule which the fate of Fouché seemed to establish—that the personage who falls from power in France, as in Turkey, must disappear from the scene of his former influence.

"I hope, Sire," replied Talleyrand, "that I have need of no more than the King's sense of justice to enable me to reside without molestation in my own country."

"We have been tricked," observed the veteran and fallen statesman to his colleagues, as they retired. In the political world, in which the Prince had lived, there was no other mode of overthrowing a statesman than by intrigue. And at present the retirement of Talleyrand had certainly been an event foreseen and provided for by the King, his favourite Decazes, and Alexander; but it was as much the result of his being odious to the opening parliament, and indifferent to the yet unformed public.

It was, indeed, a natural result that, on the eve of parliamentary governments commencing in France, the politicians of all bygone schools, either of the old Royalist, the Republican, or the Imperial régime, should disappear. The Fouchés and Talleyrands had lived their days, as well as the Montesquious and Blacases, as there was a clamour for new names and for young men, even in the ranks of the Royalists. This resuscitated and now powerful party was one of sentiment and principle. The political doctrine which it preached, which it sought to improve upon afterwards as a dogma and a duty, alone capable of saving and regenerating the country socially and politically, was certainly an anachronism, exhumed from past ages, of which it suited the simplicity and ignorance. But personal devotion to a race or a ruler, having nothing to command that devotion save birth, was as incapable of being what the Royalists wished to make it—a received political religion —as simple Mahometanism was of superseding the multiple faith and speculations of Frenchmen in things spiritual. Still the Royalists had the ardour of young proselytes, and they scorned such adherents as adopted their cause and hoisted their colours from mere motives of expediency. They hated the *roués* of aristocracy who had served the

Empire, almost as much as they abhorred the Jacobins and the regicides who aspired to service, and who pretended that they could be useful.

This personal purism of the Royalists became also the feeling of the Liberals, who in arraying themselves opposite to their antagonists as soon as the field of politics was opened by the Restoration, also became a party of sentiment and principle. Both sides repudiated the men of the Revolution and the Empire, who even, when not proscribed as Carnot was, ceased to have a marked place or influence with a generation that knew them not. To this universal fate of oblivion, Talleyrand alone formed an exception. Louis XVIII., so deeply indebted to him, could not do less than give him the title of Grand Chamberlain, with a position at Court, with corresponding dignity and income; and there he never failed to appear on all occasions of ceremony, tall, colossal, impassible, shedding sarcasms upon every ridicule, and epigram upon every folly. Possessed of a princely fortune, opening his palace to all who became distinguished in politics, or were eminent in society, the saloon of Prince Talleyrand, at the corner of the Rue St. Florentin, was what the Hotels of the Faubourg St. Germain essayed to be under the Empire, the rallying-place of opposition, where every blot of the Royalist party was hit and every puerility castigated. A spark of wit, indeed, could not be struck forth against Court or Government which was not supposed to emanate from the Hotel Talleyrand; and by degrees the Prince succeeded in making, not his peace, but a kind of alliance, with the old aristocracy and the new liberals. In a few years did Talleyrand so build up a shattered reputation, that he became one of the necessities of the Orleans

dynasty, and lived to renew that old alliance of England and France against the East of Europe, which he first essayed in 1814, which he perfected in 1831, and which he has bequeathed as almost the sole result of his political and diplomatic genius to posterity.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DUKE OF RICHELIEU'S MINISTRY—TREATY SETTLING NEW FRONTIER OF FRANCE, ON OCCUPATION—THE HOLY ALLIANCE — FIRST SESSION OF ULTRA-ROYALIST CHAMBER—LAW OF ARREST—PREVOTAL COURTS—TRIALS OF LAVALETTE AND NEY.

THE man who is of a character and in a position to become Prime Minister in a free country need not be the person to discover his own fitness. Others are sharp-sighted to perceive this, and to act upon it. The often unambitious individual soon finds himself surrounded, and paid court to, and without the purpose of forming a party is soon at the head at least of a group of men more or less capable, ready to share with him the anxieties and responsibilities of office. The Duc de Richelieu was in this position. Descended from the family of the great Cardinal, he had emigrated in 1789; and whilst his brother-nobles hastened to the States-General at Versailles, he, foreseeing the impossibility of wise or good results, betook himself as a volunteer to Suwarrow's army, with which he engaged in the celebrated siege of Ismail. After the campaign against Turkey, the Duke joined the army of Condé. On the breaking up of this, he returned to Russia, and was appointed by the Emperor Alexander governor of Odessa

and of New Russia, where he accomplished with activity and success the noble task of founding, peopling, protecting, and causing to prosper, the district so nobly situated on the shores of the Black Sea, near the mouth of one of the great rivers which flow from the interior. When Napoleon opened the frontiers of France to the emigrants, and restored the unsold property, M. de Richelieu returned; and the person whom he intrusted with the care of recovering the property remaining to him in the Gironde was the father of M. Decazes. The Duke could not completely reconcile himself to Napoleon's régime: he again returned to Russia; and it was only in 1814 that he revisited his country, and his sisters, both married and holding high position in Parisian society. A Frenchman, a noble, an administrator, a friend of Alexander, not a stranger to France, thus unmingled with its parties, either of the Emigration, the Revolution, or the Empire, the Duc de Richelieu could not but be singled out as a desirable and capable minister, although he was not a man of transcendent talent, and had the good sense to be aware of it. Appointed Minister of the Household by Prince Talleyrand, he refused. It was given out by the Russians that the harshness of the conditions imposed upon France by the Allies, as well as the peremptoriness of their language, was due in a degree to the personal dislike of Alexander for Talleyrand. To replace the latter for the negotiation of the Treaty by one agreeable to Alexander was the obvious necessity of the time. Even the ultra-Royalists saw this; and although the Comte d'Artois would have preferred a more decided ultra-Royalist than the Duc de Richelieu, who shared the constitutional reveries of Alexander, and who lived in intimacy with such men as Lainé, and other lovers of freedom

as well as royalty, still the Comte d'Artois felt the Duc de Richelieu to be the inevitable Prime Minister, and, as such, had placed before him, some time before his election, a list of names which the Pavillon Marsan (the party was so called from the name of the northern wing of the Tuileries in which the Prince dwelt) judged the fittest candidates for secondary place. The men pointed out in this list were, M. Vaublanc for the interior, Grosbois for justice, Polignac or Bourrienne for the police, and Dubouchage for the marine.

When M. Decazes went, on the part of the King, to offer the Presidency of the Council to the Duc de Richelieu, the latter hesitated to accept the ministry, which, knowing the opinions of the majority of the new Chamber, he should be obliged to fill up with such names as these. He therefore endeavoured to excuse himself from the task, and to shake off the responsibility; but the King besought, and Alexander encouraged him. To nominate persons opposed to the ultra-Royalists, to give office to even such Constitutionalists as Chateaubriand and Lainé was impossible. But the Duke insisted on appointing Decazes Police Minister. When he objected, the Duke asked him did he wish to remain Police Prefect, under such a minister as Vaublanc or Bourrienne. M. Decazes therefore accepted, and the Pavillon Marsan made no objection. Vaublanc, tried in the habits of administration, was one of those Prefects who had been to Ghent, and on whom the Comte d'Artois relied for instructing the Restoration in those secrets by which imperial despotism kept the provinces obedient and mute. Barbe-Marbois, one of those who had been transported to Cayenne by the Directory for conspiring against it in favour of royalty, had the Justice

Ministry. The Duke of Feltre was again War Minister; Dubouchage had the Marine. Corvetto, a Genoese, of supposed capability but no party, was intrusted with the Finances. Bertin de Veaux was made Secretary of Police. The rule seemed to be to admit no men of eminent talent into the cabinet. M. de Barante was for this reason thrust into the inferior place of Director of the Customs.

After all, the new Prime Minister, who also took charge of Foreign Affairs, did not effect much in obtaining a mitigation of the terms proposed by the Allies. All that they would consent to strike off from their demands were the towns of Condé, Charlemont, and Givet on the northern frontier, the forts of Joux and l'Ecluse on that of Switzerland. The military occupation of French fortresses by a foreign army of 150,000 men was diminished from seven to five years, with the possibility of three years being considered sufficient. The 800 millions of francs, pecuniary indemnity for the expenses of the last campaign were reduced to 700; but as much more was demanded for damages and spoliations committed by French armies at different periods, together with the payment and subsistence of the occupying army. The assistance of the Emperor Alexander and of the English plenipotentiaries were of most use, in the reference to a Mixed Commission of the indemnities demanded for damages. It was the smaller states which were most urgent in their demands; but, as is usual in such cases, the claims were sacrificed. It was with pain and reluctance that the Duc de Richelieu affixed his signature to the protocol, which some weeks later became a treaty.

"All is finished," wrote the Duke to his sister, Madame

de Montcalm, "I signed this fatal treaty more dead than alive. I swore not to do so, and announced my determination to the King. The unhappy Prince conjured me, bursting into tears, not to abandon him. I could not hesitate. I am sure no one could have obtained more, or as much. France, expiring under the weight of calamities, demanded a prompt deliverance."

Nevertheless, except the abstraction of Chambery and its district, and the fortress of Landau, France was little mulcted in territory for the outbreak of 1815, whilst the pecuniary penalties to which it was condemned were not so great as what France had imposed upon much poorer countries, Prussia especially. When the French Prime Minister still complained to the Emperor Alexander, the latter very delicately reminded him of what France had escaped by drawing forth a map of that country, on which were marked the different territories and provinces which Belgium, and Prussia, and Austria had recently insisted on curtailing. "Keep the map," said the Emperor of Russia to the Duc de Richelieu; "it will be hereafter a testimony of your services, and the noblest title of noblesse for your family, as well as a token of my friendship for France." The map remains still in the possession of the nephews of the Duke.

The fall of Talleyrand, the submission of France to the conditions which it pleased the four Powers to impose, were not inaptly celebrated by the conclusion of a treaty strange in its nature, form, and preamble, concluded between the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The great triumphs and alliance of 1814 had been very nearly disturbed and broken by the efforts of Prince Talleyrand at Vienna, and by the jealousies which Austria

and England entertained of Russian aggrandizement in Poland. Napoleon had returned opportunely to put an extinguisher upon such differences; and Alexander now sought to place an eternal bar to their recurrence by an application to sovereigns of those rules of Christian charity which are enjoined, but so seldom followed, even in private life,—not to steal, not to covet, not to resent injuries, and not to indulge in spoliation,—hard of observance by the individual, and to the head of a great nation charged with its interests, scarcely practical. Madame de Krudener had, however, persuaded Alexander that he should profess Christian charity not only as a man, but as a prince. This lady had acquired a strange influence over the Emperor. When a young man, Alexander had raised with the companions of his age Utopias in the way of government, plans for rendering the human race, at least that great portion of it under his sway, free, virtuous, and happy. He now superadded religious to political enthusiasm; and whilst in 1814 he attributed to himself but the mission of emancipating Europe, in 1815 he was to do more by making the Gospel the rule of politicians. The mixture of feminine and devout influence which Madame de Krudener employed to bring about this result is curious. She filled her saloons with a selection of talent and of beauty, but anxiously kept both subservient to her main idea. Madame Krudener, through Benjamin Constant, invited the great beauty of the day to join these devout, conversational, and imperial meetings; but Constant entreated Madame Recamier, in Krudener's name, to veil her beauty, and render it less resplendent, since, unmitigated, it had the effect of "troubling the souls" of the company. The matter-of-fact English politicians in Paris did not know what to

make of the Treaty of the Holy Alliance.* They more than half suspected it to be a league of despotism, varnished over with sanctity. As its tenor and its object could not but raise a shout of derision in the House of Commons, they necessarily declined having anything to do with it. The other powers, France included, signed it, and afterwards found it a most convenient instrument for the unchristian policy of crushing every vestige of liberty in each other's dominions, and in Europe generally. So

* The following is the text of the famous treaty of the Holy Alliance:—

In the name of the very holy and indivisible Trinity, their Majesties, the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia, in the midst of the events of the three last years, have acquired the intimate conviction, that it is necessary to base the future policy of governments on the sublime truths taught by the eternal religion of God the Saviour. They declare solemnly, that the present act has for its aim solely to declare, in the face of the universe, their irrevocable determination to take for the rules of their conduct the precepts of this holy religion. They have consequently agreed on the following:—

Article I.—Conformable to the words of the Holy Scriptures, which ordain men to regard each other as brethren, the three monarchs will ever remain united in the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity, and considering each other as compatriots, will, on all occasions and in all places, lend each other assistance, aid, and succour.

Article II.—Consequently, the only principle in force, between either their Governments or their subjects, shall be to render to each other reciprocal service; to testify by unalterable benevolence the mutual affection which ought to animate them; to consider each other as members of the one Christian nation; the three Allied Powers regarding each other but as delegated by Providence to rule over three branches of the same family, thus confessing that the Christian nation, of which they and their people make part, have in reality no other Sovereign than Him to whom belongs all power, because in Him are to be found all the features of love, of knowledge, and of absolute wisdom, that is to say, God, the Divine Saviour, the verb of the Most High, the Word of Life.

Article III.—All the Powers who may wish to profess these same principles solemnly, shall be admitted with eagerness and affection into this Holy Alliance.

Francis.
Frederic William.
Alexander.

Paris, September 16, 1815.

certain is religion, when introduced as an active principle into politics, to be perverted into what is uncharitable and unwise.

These treaties of forbearant conquest and pretended charity being arranged and decided upon, the Chambers were immediately summoned to meet, and on the 7th of October Louis XVIII. opened them. Lamartine describes the Chamber of Deputies as entirely composed of courtiers, emigrants, Royalist journalists or writers, provincial nobles, chosen for the purpose of wreaking vengeance on the revolution and the Empire. "It was like another France dug out of the ruins and the ashes left by invasion." It is too much the custom in France for a beaten party to despair and to efface itself in silence, slandering the present and reserving energy for the future. Unfortunately, the election had been so ordered and left so completely under the influence of the ultra-Royalists, and in the hands of the functionary class, which had nothing to hope but in subservience to what was dominant, that France had not a choice. The first Assembly elected under the Constitutional Monarchy represented neither the nation, nor its numbers, nor its interests, nor its force.

Of thorough Liberals the Chamber contained one, M. Voyer d'Argenson. Of the Constitutional Liberals who had sat in Napoleon's Chamber, and beset the Emperor with their chicane, Flauguergues was the only specimen. Lafayette was not a member: not one officer who recalled the glories of the army, not one civilian who had given guarantees to the Revolution. The whole Chamber was white; scarcely separated at first into shades; but all equally anxious to proscribe, and take the places of those of any eminence or standing under the Empire. A

blind and eager desire to strike, to spoil, and to enjoy, was the aim of the Royalists of 1815, who had not an idea beyond the freebooting one of slaying and stripping the enemy. Lost amidst the common herd of ignorance, of blind and brutal passions, were, however, a few eminent spirits, who meditated, who saw that there lay the greater part of the nation prostrate for the moment, and for whose subjugation or conversion it was necessary to provide. The different philosophic heads amongst the Royalists devised plans for attaining this end, and for regenerating France. Scarcely any two agreed, and scarcely one was consistent with himself. Some, like Chateaubriand, entertained the sincere but unfounded belief that all France was loyalist, and that the King had nothing to do but to grant all kinds of freedom in order to reign in the hearts of his people. But with this he recommended the necessity of proscribing and punishing all the men, the things, and the interests of the Revolution. He gave utterance to a world of liberal wishes in the abstract, but he most vehemently denounced a Royalist minister, who, like Decazes, learned to conciliate the Liberals, or to rally to the throne the oppressed portion of the nation. More consistent Royalists than Chateaubriand opposed Liberal principles as well as persons, and deemed that there was no safety except in the re-establishment of the aristocracy and the priesthood in their old local authority, and in totally undoing the work of time during the last half century. As to the English school of Constitutional Royalism, it was yet but in the germ; and however its idea might have been developed and fixed, it was yet some months ere any of its liberal men could muster courage or find a voice to speak out.

Such was the Assembly which the King addressed in a speech drawn up by himself. Its chief argument was that of the definitive treaty with the Allies, and the sacrifice which it compelled.

"Its tenor," said the King, "will be communicated to you without restriction. You will know, Messieurs, and France will see, the deep pain which these sacrifices must have caused me; but the safety of my kingdom rendered this great determination necessary. I have ordered a considerable portion of my private revenue to be paid this year from the civil list into the Treasury. My family have done the same. The salaries of all my servants will be diminished for the same purpose. I shall be always ready to associate with my people in the sacrifices which circumstances render imperative."

The King insisted emphatically on the Charter, and made excuses for the change which he had felt obliged to ordain. Its important point was the oath to the Constitution which it was for Princes, Peers, and Deputies to swear. The Count D'Artois had at the eleventh hour, that is, on the approach of Napoleon in March last, taken this oath. He could not but repeat it now. The Peers, Polignac and Labourdonnais amongst them, alone declined to take the oath. The Chamber made a worthy choice in M. Lainé for its President. But its first care and its loudest cry were for vengeance.

"It is our duty," said they, "to demand that justice be done upon those who set the crown in peril. Your clemency has been without limit. We do not ask you to retract it. But we supplicate you in the name of the people themselves, victims of the misfortunes which overwhelm us, to order that justice should proceed where

clemency has stopped short. Let those, who even now, encouraged with impunity, do not fear to make a parade of their rebellion, be delivered up to the past severity of the tribunals. The Chamber will concur with zeal in the passing of laws necessary for the accomplishment of such ends. Trust your authority to none but pure hands."

The Session was thus opened by the demands of the Chamber for personal vengeance. The majority had unfortunately not another idea. One of the great and salutary effects of constitutional freedom and habits, is the multiplicity of things, of interest, of ideas, of political business, in fact, which it creates and throws out as the food of active minds. Questions of persons will, no doubt, always recur, often intrude, with the passions and motives which they excite. But these are stifled, and set aside, and mitigated by the abundance of topics and objects of far higher interest, and which turn even the struggles of parties and of men into channels which blunt rivalry and compel selfish littleness to hide itself, if not disappear. But a body of representatives, met for the first time to enter upon the business of political life, is too ignorant and empty-minded to comprehend or feel any other than a personal question. Perhaps a Royalist Minister, of high views and transcendant talent, might at such a moment have led even a Royalist Chamber into a course of acts and legislation calculated to base their own authority upon a new system; but none of the Royalist Ministers had an initiative, original, or a powerful mind. When, therefore, the Chambers, from want of any other object or topic, rushed to the gratification of personal animosity against the Bonapartists, Ministers

could do nothing but join in the cry, and, if possible, lead in the charge.

M. Decazes thought to indulge the Chamber, and meet its wishes, by bringing in laws for permitting unlimited arrests and for punishing seditious cries. The Minister of Justice at the same time announced a commission which was to examine into the conduct of military officers during the Hundred Days. The press was fettered: to utter opinion in print was almost impossible. The national representation had been closed against the patriots. The only mouths which dared utter a word of disaffection were those of the lower class, when an individual, or a knot of men in a moment of inebriety or excitement, would vent the inmost feelings of all in a desperate cry of "*Down with the Bourbons!*" or "*Long live Napoleon!*" There could be no danger from such idle clamours—there was, indeed, far more danger in suppressing them. But the susceptibility of Royalist ears was offended by learning that others thought not as themselves, and hence the necessity of a law to punish so trivial a crime. M. Decazes brought in a law giving power to all authorities to arrest whomsoever they pleased, such person to be kept in prison as long as the law lasted, if not tried before. The Minister prefaced the law by a long preamble in praise of the liberty of the subject, and declared that he had provided for it by enjoining the official, who caused the arrest, to announce the fact of his having done so to his immediate superiors, and these in turn taking the same precaution, till the fact reached the bureau of the Minister. But as all police functionaries support each other, where was the guarantee? M. de Serre opposed the law. M. Pasquier, the late Minister of Justice, declared that no arrested

person should be considered in the least guilty till he was examined, and he proposed limiting this power of arbitrary imprisonment to the prefects. Marmont made an excellent speech against it in the Chamber of Peers. Some of the deputies pleaded that so grave a subject as the suspension of all individual liberty demanded inquiry. "Inquiry!" retorted the Home Minister, Vaublanc, "what need of inquiry to learn the wants and wishes of France? France desires its King." This kind of eloquence smothered all discussion in acclamations of applause. It was on this occasion that Voyer d'Argenson alluded to the massacres in the south. Ministers demanded the right of unlimited arrest, at a time when ruffians like Trestaillons broke open the prisons and marched off the inmates to be shot. The Chamber would not listen to such arguments, and passed the Bill by 294 votes against 56.

M. Pasquier, in the discussion of the law of arrest, perceived how vain it was to attempt to check or moderate the fury of the Chamber. When, therefore, the laws repressing seditious cries were referred to a committee, he accepted the office of reporter, and concluded as violently as any. He announced, and gave it as his opinion, that none of the existing courts, whether of assize or purely magisterial, were fit for trying such shadowy crimes as seditious cries and exclamations. Prévôtal or military courts could alone dispose of them. The reporter proposed transportation and heavy fines, when the convicted were able to pay them, as the fitting penalties. Transportation, however, did not satisfy the members for such a cry as "Down with the Bourbons!" The penalty of death seemed preferable to many. The galleys for life were

proposed as the penalty for an isolated cry, death for a cry concerted with others, and the penalty of parricide for a seditious cry followed by actual sedition.

At the time when the Chambers were thus legislating to quench in blood the expression of popular opinion, the *Messeniennes* of De Lavigne, in which the poet arraigned and held up to public scorn all who had joined in the conquest and oppression of France, passed from every one's hand to their memories, whilst poignant songs of Beranger, still more outrageous to the Bourbons and their restorers, circulated in manuscript, and awoke the enthusiasm of every dinner-table and of every *café*. To crush with the severest penalties the harmless effusion of popular feeling, whilst the highest poets and intellects of the nation were uttering the same obnoxious cry, was as idle as it was cruel. The judges and the police of the Emperor had been odious from their revenge; but under the new system of a reign which was called Constitutional, law, police, and tribunals became ten times more tyrannical, more exceptional, more Draconic. In June 1815, the great body of the nation, at least of its educated classes, by no means identified their resentment at foreign conquest and oppression with the cause of Napoleon. They were even inclined to execrate him and his party as a cause of the national disasters. Neither did the partizans of the country's liberties consider Imperialism as an ally. But the furious and indiscriminate persecution which the "white Jacobins," as Lafayette called the Royalists, commenced against all parties other than their own, soon had the effect of amalgamating the Bonapartists, the patriot, and the liberal in one common league of indignation and resistance. Had Royalism distinguished between these

different enemies, it might in time have got the better of each and all; but by driving them together, and forcing them to form one great national army of opposition, it collected and provoked a mass of resistance, before which the dynasty and all attached to it were finally obliged to give way.

The law of indefinite and prolonged arrest, not on the warrant of a Secretary of State, but of the poorest functionary; the edict of transportation and the galleys for a seditious cry or expression, created such animadversion—not in the Chamber, indeed, but in the public—that M. Pasquier introduced into it a clause which considered and treated as a seditious cry, the supposition that the Government or the King could meditate a resuscitation of tithes, or a restoration of the property of nobles and of the Church, sold in the Revolution. This strange twisting of their own law against themselves excited the ire of certain Royalists, especially of Chateaubriand. "Thus," said he, "you will seize, by virtue of your iniquitous law, an emigrant returned to the land of his fathers, and who in visiting his paternal estates, may shed tears for its loss, and utter imprecations on the hands that robbed him. Your edict awards fine and imprisonment for the effusion of such sentiments as these." And Chateaubriand was right. It was iniquitous to punish the emigrant, resentful of the alienation of his family manor and estate; but surely it was equally iniquitous to inflict similar punishment for the expression of pity towards the captive of St. Helena!

Such laws, as M. Pasquier justly observed, required courts of justice formed especially to try them; and accordingly Clarke, Duke of Feltre, in his capacity of War Minister, proposed, on the 17th of November, to establish

a Prévôtal Court in each Department. The Prévôt or Provost-Marshal is the executioner of military punishment. His name affixed to the new court sufficiently bespoke it. It was to consist of a Prévôt or military judge, of the rank of colonel, to be assisted by five judges. They were to take cognizance of any crime denounced to them, of rebellion, disaffection, disorders committed either in acts, writing, or speaking, by military or civilian. The judgment was to be instantaneous, and so was to be its execution. In fact, the law established a drum-head court-martial in the capital of every department, with the lives, liberties, and fortunes of all citizens at its mercy. No appeal was allowed to the Court of Cassation; and an especial clause took from the King the power of pardon. M. Hyde de Neuville, however enthusiastic a Royalist, exclaimed against this limitation of the King's right to pardon. He was not listened to. The same compact majority of 290 voted the law. The 56 votes in opposition to the previous law now dwindled to 13. The inutility of resistance was seen.

Whilst the first debates and the first laws of the Chamber of Deputies were exclusively of this kind, the Courts of Justice and the Chamber of Peers offered the spectacle of scenes of the same kind. Labedoyère's trial and execution took place in August. The trials of Lavalette and of Marshal Ney were deferred by doubts as to the courts in which they should be judged. At last, on the 20th, Lavalette was brought before the Court of Assise and a jury, but a jury of which the list had been prepared by Government. On the 21st, Ney was arraigned before the peers.

Count Lavalette had been the Director of the Post-office,

which he imprudently seized or was induced to take in the Hundred Days, before Napoleon reached Paris. This gave to his conduct the appearance of premeditation and conspiracy. He explained this by alleging that he visited the Post-office in search of news; but found the clerks as well as the Minister in agitation at the prospect of the Emperor's speedy arrival. Both, according to Lavalette, asked him to resume his old station as head of the Post-office; and M. Ferrand, who held the post for the King, not only insisted on vacating it, but on getting a passport from Lavalette, as Imperial Post-master. This constituted an usurpation of ministerial authority, difficult to rebut. Lavalette was condemned to death. The Count was much beloved, was not only dear to the Bonapartists, as an aid-de-camp to the Emperor, and as having married a Beauharnais, but as an obliging and inoffensive man, who had never borne arms. Every effort was made by even the moderate Royalists to save him. The Princess de Vaudemont obtained for Madame Lavalette an audience of Louis XVIII.; but his reception of her was, his Majesty said, a mark of personal interest to herself, not pardon to her husband. Marmont then interfered to obtain an audience of the Duchess d'Angoulême. He could only do so as the Duchess was returning from mass, when Madame Lavalette flung herself at the Princess's feet. The daughter of Louis XVI. did but tear her robe from the unfortunate lady's grasp, and passed on, animated not by pity, but resentment. Not an incident of this drama was lost on the people of Paris, and indeed of France. In the present instance the tragedy was not completed. Madame Lavalette, who was in the habit of visiting her husband, on the evening previous to his execution prepared a plan for his

escape in her clothes. Her young daughter accompanied Madame Lavalette to the prison. Clad in his wife's clothes, with his daughter by his side, and his handkerchief to his face, as suffering and ill, Lavalette walked forth from his cell. Five of the gaolers were seated in the hall, through which it was first necessary to pass. The inner gaol-keeper laid his hand on Lavalette's arm, with the observation, "You quit early to-night." The outer porter sat between the two gates, both of which he had to open. The man looked petrified and doubtful, and Lavalette was obliged to strike the door, in order to arouse him to open it. This Cerberus passed, there was the curiosity of the military on guard, all crowding to see Madame Lavalette. These, too, were escaped, and the sedan-chair outside reached, when one of the porters of the chair was found to be missing. Every moment was a life. But at length the condemned man was carried off, and went to hide himself in the very house of the Prime Minister, one of whose chief clerks gave him shelter, until such time as means could be procured for getting the fugitive out of France.

The mode of Lavalette's final escape is well known. Sir Robert Wilson, with a command in the army of occupation, concerted with Captain Hutchinson and Mr. Bruce how Lavalette might best be carried off. He was brought to the English general's residence: clad in an English uniform, and seated in an open vehicle beside the general, he was carried outside the barrier, and as rapidly as horses could carry him, on the road to the Belgian frontier. What rendered escape more difficult was the knowledge which all the servants of the post along the road had of their former chief. Lavalette, however, escaped every

vigilance, and was enabled to take refuge with the King of Bavaria, ever kind to Bonapartist exiles. As if the French public had not been sufficiently occupied and excited by events which necessarily created sympathy in the cause of Bonaparte and his followers, Sir Robert Wilson and his companions were arrested and brought to trial; the accusation being rendered easy by a letter, which Sir Robert wrote to Lord Grey, containing a full account of all that had been done, and which letter the English general with great simplicity put into the French post-office. The heroine of the tragedy, poor Madame Lavalette, was kept in close and painful confinement for a month, the rigour and the suspense having the effect upon her weakly frame of weakening, if not disordering, her intellect for a great number of years. It was impossible to do more to turn the public interest and sympathies against them than the Ministers of the Bourbons did by these trials.

A victim, whose fate excited far more interest, was Marshal Ney. It was one of the great misfortunes that befel the Bourbons, that they had to deal with such a case. The conduct of Ney in asking for a command against Napoleon, and his receiving that which was destined for the Duke of Berri, the Court putting faith in his volunteered and vaunting promises to bring back the Emperor a captive, his advance as long as Napoleon had but a small band, his hesitation on learning that regiments had adhered to him; all these circumstances greatly aggravated his case. The Marshal did not join his old master, moved by the sight of him or his approach, like Labedoyère, or drawn by the acclamations of his army. On the contrary, Ney held a council with himself, with his officers, sent some to reconnoitre the strength of Napoleon,

and at last, after much calculation, not only took the resolution of personally joining him, but made every use of his position to bring over with him all the forces and all the authorities he could. If acts of treason can deserve death, Ney's certainly did. The excuse of the rude soldier lay in his not having been reared in that first law of the noble and the gentleman, faith to his word and to his sovereign. With Ney, the glory, and honour, and independence of his country and of its armies overruled every other principle and thought. By joining Napoleon he again took up the cause of French arms and empire against Europe. The personal claims and fortunes of either Louis or Napoleon might have been and were probably to him indifferent. Such motives cannot exculpate the faithlessness of Ney, but they take from him the stigma of mean or selfish treason, and place him in a position, in which to command the sympathies of the great majority of his countrymen. With these sympathies and admiration the exploits of Ney had already identified him. To sacrifice such a victim in presence of the French nation was a dangerous experiment. For instead of attaining any of the true and warrantable ends of punishment, it on the contrary defeated them, by awakening the pride and the best feelings of the nation in behalf of the victim, not against him, thus hallowing and heroizing his crime, instead of, as was desirable, stigmatizing it as condemnatory and base. Had Ney been allowed to escape, the object would have been obtained. In such a position his countrymen would have passed an impartial judgment upon him. But to shoot the Achilles of the French army, under any circumstances, was a blunder and an outrage, of which no monarch or politician could be guilty, except in total

ignorance of the feelings of the people they were called to govern, and of the necessities of the crisis which they were incapable to comprehend.*

Ney was taken in the vicinity of Aurillac, in a chateau of one of his relations, where he had taken refuge, and there he was betrayed by a magnificent sabre, the gift of Napoleon, which he imprudently exposed. Brought to Paris he was thrown into the Conciergerie. The first idea was to have him tried by a Council of War. The War Minister appointed Marshal Moncey to preside over it. The reply in which Moncey declined such an office, spoke so fully the sentiments of the army in general that it might have made prudent Ministers recoil. The War Office punished the Marshal for penning his noble letter, by ordering him under arrest for three months. Chateaubriand himself says, that the change from the personages of the political and military world before 1814, to those who occupied it after, was like passing from a society of giants to one of pigmies: the War Minister of Louis XVIII. sending Marshal Moncey to three months' arrest, because he would not preside over a Court-martial to try Ney, was, indeed, like a chastisement of Gulliver by the Lilliputians.

* In mitigation of the Duke of Wellington's severity, in the two instances of Ney and the Museum, the opinion of his principals are to be borne in mind. Those of the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, appear in the "Castlereagh Correspondence," and do him little honour. He was first for delivering Napoleon to the French King, making it a condition that he should be tried, and should not escape. He was in agony lest the capitulation of Paris should protect any in it from punishment. He strongly pressed the utmost rigour to be applied to those instrumental in bringing back Napoleon. Lord Castlereagh protests against despoiling the museum, and tells Lord Liverpool he must not expect Alexander to go his (Liverpool's) length. Lord Castlereagh states the Duke to be against the restoration of the works of art. In fact, Castlereagh and Wellington were overruled in every wish to be lenient and merciful by the severity of the Government at home, including the Prime Minister and the Regent.

Four Marshals were found who consented to make part of a Court-martial. Ney was summoned before it; when the elder Beranger, Ney's counsel, unfortunately pleaded the imcompetence of the Court. In fact, Ney's comrades, some of whom took service in the Hundred Days, could not have condemned him to death. Ney, however, claimed, through his advocate, to be tried by his peers. The members of the Court-martial, glad to escape the lash, declared themselves incompetent. And an angry letter of the Duc de Richelieu, breathing all the animosity of the Court, arraigned Ney before the Council or Chamber of Peers. The trial commenced on the 21st of November. The Procureur-general, Bellart, conducted the prosecution. Before he received this official appointment, he had been sounded by the friends of Ney, and asked to undertake his defence. Bellart replied, that his conviction leaned against the accused, and he would thus be a bad advocate. He then said that the Marshal should not trust his cause to lawyers, but should undertake his own defence and speak out before a Council of War, which would appreciate the natural and simple defence of a soldier. Ney did not follow this advice; and the most important part of the trial, that which concerned the Marshal's conduct at Lons Le Saulnier, was passed in recrimination between him and General De Bourmont, Ney accusing Bourmont of having precipitated him into joining Napoleon, and not having made use of a single word of dissuasion. Bourmont told a story directly the reverse: yet what mattered it? The Marshal was not a child, to be led implicitly by the opinion of his subordinate officer. To inculpate Bourmont was not to exculpate Ney. Another mode of defence was to invoke the con-

vention or capitulation of Paris, in a clause of which Wellington and Blucher guaranteed to all who were then in Paris, that they should not be disquieted for their acts or political opinions. The Duke of Wellington was appealed to, but gave it as his opinion, that the capitulation only regarded such persecution as his and Blucher's army or officers could exercise.

As soon as the written convention had reached England, Lord Liverpool himself had been struck by the ambiguity of the terms, and at once conceived the fear that they might be used to shield some of the chief traitors to the Bourbon crown. The Duke had then assured the Prime Minister who, we are sorry to say, was amongst those most anxious that a striking example might be made of the chief defectionists, that the Convention of Paris afforded them no protection whatever against Louis XVIII.'s authorities; of course he was now bound to maintain that opinion.

The signification thus put on the clause of the Convention by the Duke is certainly not tenable. The Parisians and the Commissioners, who surrendered on these conditions, could not understand that it was merely Prussians and English that were bound by them, or that Russians or Royalists entering Paris a week after would be at liberty to exercise what reprisals they pleased. The capitulation, however imprudent of Prussia and England to grant, certainly did cover Ney, who was then in Paris; and the circumstance of the Marshal's flying to conceal himself, and not trusting to the terms of the capitulation, was no proof of its not being applicable to him. A generous victor would have insisted on protecting the Marshal; but the feeling of the Ministry at home, of Allied Courts and camps abroad,

including the Tuilleries, was too decidedly against Ney, and against the general heinousness of his conduct, to permit the Duke to do otherwise than acquiesce in his fate.

The last mode of defence imagined by the lawyers was singular. The treaties just concluded and signed a few days previous took Sarre Louis from France and comprised it in the dominion of Prussia. Ney was a native of this town; his counsel, therefore, represented that he was no longer a Frenchman. Ney was even more astonished than the Court at hearing himself styled not amenable to French law by being a Prussian citizen. He protested, and declared that he was French, and would die a Frenchman. Of 161 Peers present, 8 abstained from voting, 17 were for the penalty of deportation, 139 were for death. Many are said to have given the latter vote in the hope that it would be commuted into banishment; if so, they little knew the sentiments of the Court, impelled to vengeance by irascibility, and by the vain idea that a great example would contribute to the solidity of the throne. Ney's fate was irrevocably decided. Though at first he declined the visit of an ecclesiastic, he afterwards summoned the curate of St. Sulpice. With him the Marshal, on the morning of the 7th of December, quitted his prison of the Luxembourg for the place of execution, which, instead of being on the plain of Grenelle, the usual place, was fixed to be at the other end of the Luxembourg garden, between it and the Observatory. Ney refused to have his eyes covered, saying, "he had been for five-and-twenty years in the habit of facing balls and bullets." He then took his place before the company of soldiers, and solemnly protested against his sentence. Taking off his hat with one hand, and placing the other on his left breast, he exclaimed, "Soldiers,

right to the heart!" There was some hesitation on the part of the officer who was to give the word of command, but his place was supplied; and Ney, who had braved death so many thousand times in battle, met it from judicial violence, in those doubtful times and fortunes, in which soldiers, dragged different ways by conflicting ideas of honour, patriotism, and allegiance, should have had more allowance made for them than courtiers, bred in far different times, and in ideas of fifty years previous, could induce themselves to make.

The frenzied Royalists, who composed the Chamber of Deputies, would not entertain an idea, or listen to any scheme of legislation, other than vengeance and blood; and when we blame M. Decazes for his law of arrest, and his penalties against seditious cries—when we turn in disgust from the harsh letter of the Duc de Richelieu, arraigning Ney—we should not forget that such laws, such provisions, and such modes of expression, were forced upon Ministers, who, even in adopting such language, and satisfying such vindictiveness, could scarcely content the impatience, or avoid awakening the suspicion and enmity of the majority. One of the most furious of the *White Jacobins,* the parliamentary vultures of 1815, was M. de la Bourdonnaye. Impatient with the Government for not striking with sufficient quickness and rigour, he had proposed what he called an amnesty. An amnesty by name certainly headed his project, but this amnesty was only proposed for the sake of a world of exceptions which followed, and which classed all the French who had served or co-operated with Napoleon in a series of categories, each marked by a severe penalty. In the categories of M. de la Bourdonnaye all who had held the chief administration

or military offices in the Hundred Days, all the Generals and Prefects who had served the Usurper—these were to be taken and tried, and condemned, if found guilty, to death. The less guilty were to be transported, and the property of all the condemned was to be confiscated. This sweeping proscription, which aimed, at least, at some fifteen hundred persons and their families, whilst it filled the whole country with dismay, was taken into serious consideration by the Royalists, who were determined to rival Robespierre. The Ministers themselves stood aghast. The King was personally grieved, and declared that he would adhere to his original amnesty, nor punish more than those originally set down by Fouché for trial or for exile.

To tear their prey from the Royalists of the Chamber was not easy; however, the Duke de Richelieu took advantage of the stupor caused in the public, and of the momentary satisfaction given in the Chamber by the execution of Marshal Ney, and he came down to propose an amnesty, the sole exceptions being the two lists of obnoxious persons drawn by Fouché. The only addition was the prohibition to enter France directed against all the family of Bonaparte. The proposal, avowedly put forward to defeat M. de la Bourdonnaye's Syllan proscription, was coldly received by the Chamber, which referred it to the Commission already intrusted with the examination and report of the previous project. Corbierre and Villele were both of this Commission—two plodding men, the one a Breton lawyer, the other a Gascon squire, already labouring to win the confidence of the Royalist party, of which they afterwards became the chiefs. Under their guidance the Commission proceeded to tack La Bourdonnaye's categories, by way of

amendment, to the Ministerial project of amnesty. They proposed to visit with especial severity those who could be proved to have been accomplices of Bonaparte's return before the fact, and all who had accepted place from the Usurper before the 23rd of March, that is, in the first days of his return. It was evident that the trials of the several hundred persons thus implicated, with the proofs to be adduced, and the uncertainty hanging over the fate of so many, would keep the country for a twelvemonth to come, in a state of agitation, of terror, and of frenzy. Such a prospect filled the White Jacobins with delight; but the Government was more than ever alarmed at such a prospect, and the King himself began to feel that the ultra-Royalists were determined on making his reign an epoch of troubles, proscription, and confiscations, as inconsistent with prudence as it was with humanity.

The debate opened in the first days of 1816. For the first time the Chamber was divided into two parties, the White Jacobins, eager for proscription and blood, and the more moderate, who were anxious to close the civil war, and to enter upon the duties of a regular and a constitutional Government. Ministers began by representing that, of all the acts of a Government, an amnesty was that peculiarly within the power and emanating from the heart of the King. He had the power to grant it without consulting his Chambers, and if he did so, it was for them, more especially in this case, to respect the will and the generosity of the Sovereign, who refused to be the instrument of vengeance against any more than the guilty persons already signalized. This called up La Bourdonnaye, who accused the Ministers of weakness, of the escape of Lavalette, and of obeying an indulgent feeling, similar to that of 1814,

which had provoked and facilitated a successful rebellion. The Home Minister, Vaublanc, reminded the Chamber that Government legislated with a full knowledge of the sentiments of the country, of what it desired, and of what was necessary to its peace. He declared that it was imperatively necessary to heal the wounds of the country, and put an end to the decimation of one party by another. Royer Collard dwelt on the dangers of confiscation. People began by confiscating because they condemned, they then proceeded to condemn because confiscation followed. Towards the close of the lengthened discussion, Ministers begged a suspension of the sitting, which they made use of to consult the King as to the amendment he would consent to. On their return, they announced that the King consented to accept the power to banish the individuals of the second list, who previously could not be exiled without trial. To this, and the proscription of the Bonaparte family, the King consented; but he refused to sanction any public exceptions to the amnesty, or any new classes or categories of guilty. The trial of strength was upon the first amendment of the Commission, establishing the categories and exception to the amnesty. M. Duvergier D'Hauranne moved to set it aside, by the previous question. This, in a Chamber of 349 voters, was carried by 184 votes against 175. So narrow an escape had the King and his Ministers, with their policy of putting a stop to persecutions, of being defeated by the White Jacobins,—with such difficulty was the Royalist Chamber of 1815 prevented from following in the track of the Convention, and rivalling it in frenzy and in blood. The confiscation clause was rejected by a majority as small. The clause ordaining the exile of regicides passed. Still

Louis XVIII. and M. Decazes, as well as the Duke of Richelieu, obtained an important triumph, one that showed how the extravagance of the ultra-Royalists might be successfully resisted, and which encouraged the King and his confidants to persevere in moderation, and to form plans for rendering such policy predominant.

CHAPTER X.

ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE A MORE LIBERAL ELECTORAL LAW DEFEATED BY THE ROYALISTS—DESIRE TO PRESERVE STATE LANDS FOR THE CHURCH—CHAMBRE INTROUVABLE—VAUBLANC RETIRES—MARRIAGE OF THE DUC DE BERRI—INSURRECTION OF GRENOBLE.

THE first months of the session of the Chambers of 1815-16 offered but one uninterrupted exhalation of Royalist animosity and bile, in which the less passionate chimed from prudence, and the Ministers from necessity. But the vindictiveness of the majority having swollen to an extravagant measure in the categories of La Bourdonnaye, Ministers were compelled to resist, to make use of the King's name in so doing, and thus placing themselves in opposition to the ultra-Royalists, broke the Chamber of Deputies into two parties. Both, indeed, were Royalists; both with lofty ideas of the King's prerogative. But whilst the Count d'Artois, with the courtiers and politicians attached to him, had come to the conclusion that the great majority of the country were Royalists, and all that were not so, a vile and insignificent herd, to be crushed and annihilated, the Duke de Richelieu, M. Decazes, and the King discerned, that there was a wide and discontented public, totally unrepresented in the Chamber, altogether

excluded from the Constitutional pale, yet possessed of wealth, intellect, and influence, forming even in the capital a society more large and more respected than that connected with the Court, decidedly in opposition to it, and moreover finding in pamphlets and volumes, if not in the daily press, a *tribune*, as the French call it, from whence to address the public, already of equal importance and weight with the oratory of the exclusively aristocratic Chambers. The English press, too, and the English parliamentary opposition, expressed strong disgust, and uttered warnings against the severe reaction, which the partisans of the Bourbons had commenced in Spain and in France. The wholesale condemnation of all the Spanish liberals and literary men to the galleys, joined to the executions and proscriptions in Paris, and at the same time the resuscitation of religious intolerance, turned public opinion in England against ultra-Royalism in France. And the counsellors of Louis XVIII. were not insensible to such a change.

Fortunately for its dignity and character, the Chamber of Deputies found some other subject to occupy it than proscription and confiscation. The Charter had ordained that the Assembly of Representatives should be renewed or re-elected by one-fifth in each year. According to what rule? By that which had in the first instance been hastily adopted, intrusting to the departmental colleges formed by Napoleon the election of Deputies? Or by some better weighed and more amply discussed law, fitted to the altered circumstances of the times?

The Ministry had a manifest interest to work some change in the electoral body, which had returned a majority of such red-hot Royalists. The simplest and the surest

way for the Government was to fling itself on the liberal and national party, or at least upon the Royalist section of it. All that such men demanded for the present was, the substitution of direct election for the two degrees hitherto practised with the overwhelming influence of Government functionaries over each act of choice. The Charter said, that the payment of 300 francs direct taxation should be requisite for the electoral franchise. This surely was aristocratic and conservative enough. It, however, was rejected by Ministers, and the Duke de Richelieu frankly stated his objection to be, that "the electoral power would not be sufficiently under the control of the superior power of the State." Ministers therefore adhered to the double mode of election, and proposed that the first choice of candidates should be intrusted to a cantonal assembly, consisting of the sixty inhabitants which paid most taxes, to whom would be adjoined the functionaries and clergy of the district. This cantonal college was to elect half the departmental college, which again, augmented by the highest tax-payers and functionaries, was to choose the deputies.

M. De Villele was appointed the reporter of the committee charged with the examination of the electoral law. He ably represented the views and objections of the Royalist majority; and these went to the nullification of ministerial influence, and the substitution for it of the power of territorial wealth. The Commission proposed forming the cantonal assemblies of all persons paying 50 francs of direct taxes annually. These were to elect as members of the electoral college persons paying 300 francs taxes. The deputies elected by these could not fail to represent property and territorial property; for inhabitants

of towns rarely paid the required amount of taxation, except in the shape of *patentes* for carrying on business, and these were not to be counted as a direct tax. The two schemes of election by ministerial influence, and by territorial ascendancy, were thus arrayed in battle against each other, and the fight was carried on during several weeks in many an animated sitting. In these debates the Royalists found what they had hitherto wanted, an able and intelligent leader, not rising indeed to eloquence, but displaying the coolness, the readiness, the perfect understanding and mastery which constitutes the leader of a party. In opposition to his opinion, the most remarkable speakers were not members of the Cabinet, but men of more liberal Royalism, such as Lainé and Royer Collard, who preferred direct election. As to Ministers, neither they nor their subordinates showed any degree of parliamentary talent, although M. Guizot, M. Villemain, and many who afterwards showed the highest qualities of the orator, at the time occupied places under the Government without seats in the Chamber. The necessity of parliamentary talent was not yet found for statesmanship.

The first vote of the Chamber rejected the re-election by one-fifth. Ministers had claimed the right of selecting the first fifth to be re-elected, which rendered the proposal more suspicious. The next question was with regard to age. The Royalists would not allow deputies to be under forty. It was pleaded in vain that a man of thirty, if married, was steady enough to be a representative. The Chamber maintained forty years as the age at which political ripeness commenced. It then proceeded to vote the electoral law, not as Ministers had proposed, but as their own Commission had drawn it up, composing the electoral

colleges of all paying fifty francs taxes. The only concession made to the King was the power of superadding electors of his choice, equal to a tenth of those who were electors by vote and by right. The Chamber of Deputies passed the law in this shape by 180 votes against 132.

In thus maintaining the interests of territorial property over ministerial influence, the Chamber of Deputies had reckoned without their host. They forgot that there existed another Chamber, that of the Peers, in which it was not territorial interest which predominated, but, on the contrary, functionary and Court interest. What predominated in the Chamber of Deputies was not the idea of high aristocracy, but of the lesser and provincial aristocracy, of squiredom in fact, which though patronized by the Count d'Artois, was still distinct in tendency and in ideas from the grandees of the upper aristocracy that sought resuscitation. Hence, notwithstanding all the oratorical efforts of Chateaubriand to prove the electoral law sanctioned by the Chamber of Deputies, as wise and even liberal, the Chamber of Peers met the wishes of the minority by rejecting it altogether, and thus undoing the great work.

No sooner had the Chamber of Peers rejected the electoral law, than the Ministry took a step which evidently betrayed its intention of causing the re-election of at least one-fifth of the deputies. They brought down a bill on the 5th of April, declaring that the ordonnance of the preceding July should continue to be the rule in re-election, until the Chamber had time and liberty to pass a new law in the ensuing session. The threat filled the Chamber with ill humour. The Ministers might select the departments of the most violent deputies, subject them to re-election, and turn the concentrated stream of Government

influence against them. They instantly referred the proposal to the old Commission, of which Villele was the chief. In forty-eight hours he came forward, stating that he was ready to read his Report. M. Lainé, President of the Chamber, objected, and said that twenty-four hours' notice should be given before reading the Report. Villele and others declared that notice had been given. M. Lainé denied it. M. Forbins des Issarts contradicted the President, who called him to order; but the Chamber avenged itself on its President, by ordering the Report to be instantly read. M. Lainé had proposed and voted for direct election, against both Government and Commission. This was an act of liberalism which the Royalists could not forgive; they did not hesitate therefore to cast a slur upon their President. Lainé gave up the chair to a vice-president, withdrew and resigned; but at the request of the King, who hinted that the Session was approaching its term, Lainé resumed his seat. M. Villele, as reporter, concluded for the adoption of the Ministerial proposal, with two provisos. One of these was, that the Chamber should be re-elected altogether, or not at all; thus prohibiting the election of one-fifth. The other forbade the adjunction of any supplementary electors by the King. This in the opinion of the Royalists secured them against dissolution.

Whilst the Ministers of Louis XVIII. were thus fundamentally at variance with the Chamber of Deputies on the subject of the electoral law and the basis to be given to political power in the country, there was equal diversity, and indeed hostility, of opinion between them on the subject of the budget, and respecting the best mode of paying the large arrears, as well as the sum to be paid to foreign

states. In both questions Ministers were more embarrassed than aided by the precedents and traditions of the Imperial Government. The legislators of the Directory and the Empire, Sièyes, and Napoleon himself, had so perverted the principles of representation, that to extricate it from the tangled skein of functionary influence was impossible. In finance the Empire bequeathed equal ignorance and embarrassments. Napoleon's regular and domestic revenue of about forty millions sterling formed a small part of his resources. The French army had a revenue, a budget or property of its own. Had the Empire endured, the army would have replaced the Church as a wealthy and all-powerful corporation. Up to 1813, the contributions of foreign and subject countries flowed into its coffers. That turning epoch brought fiscal distress more keenly felt than any other. Instead of French armies subsisting upon foreign countries, they were driven behind the Rhine and the Alps; and the Emperor was forced to the necessity of not only anticipating his revenues, but seizing and selling communal property. Thus at last was realized the prophecy of Pitt, that want of credit and failure of resources would bring down the military power of France. Napoleon did not know what credit was. His tyranny, indeed, almost proscribed the class which accumulated wealth and nurtures credit. He incurred no debts, when his prosperity and power would have enabled him to do so, and when it would have been wise to have provided an imperial system of credit, capable of extension. But his conquests gave him facilities of spoliation abroad, which rendered credit needless to him at home; and hence in the hour of need, whilst his great rival raised and equipped Europe with her millions, Napoleon could not find the pecuniary means to

meet her. Had Napoleon had the resources of credit, at all proportionate to his empire, and its power, he might in 1813, in 1814, and in 1815, have made a far more vigorous resistance. Notwithstanding the paucity of men, he would not have been reduced to face Blucher and Schwarzenburg with small armies of 60,000 and 80,000. When we consider that the whole of the French soldiers in garrison abroad had returned to France, and that there could be no want of men, the marvel is, that Napoleon could muster little more than 100,000 men to march against double the number of English and of Prussians in 1815. Had he known and prepared the sources of making money, as he had studied that of making soldiers, Waterloo would not have found him at such a disadvantage. The small sum that had been left in the Treasury, or could be scraped from the Receivers-General, with two millions sterling that Ouvrard advanced him, were all the pecuniary resources that Napoleon could muster for a campaign, towards which there was scarcely forthcoming a horse or a harness.

The Royal Minister who succeeded to the Finance Department in 1814, had met the thirty millions sterling arrears in that year, by issuing obligations payable within three years, and bearing eight per cent. interest. Instead of this being liquidated, they had to add to it the arrears of 1815, which were considerable. Ministers proposed to meet the united arrears in the same way as in 1814, by obligations, for the payment of which, four hundred millions of hectares of woods, government property, were appropriated. Besides arrears, there were in addition the ordinary expense of the year, estimated at 21,000,000*l.*, twelve millions sterling of extraordinary expense, consisting of one year's payment, or one fifth of the twenty-eight millions

due to foreign powers, upwards of five millions sterling for the expense of the army of occupation, and other items. With the five per cent. stock at and under sixty, Ministers despaired of a loan, and saw no means of meeting the accumulated burden, save by greatly increased levies of money. Taxes were augmented to the utmost, and the property-tax, as well as that on moveables, was swelled by additional per centage. The stamp duties were greatly augmented. Money to be paid in security for holding different offices, was increased, and the rule extended, so that in many instances the money thus lodged was not less than the full value of the place. In order to render this tolerable, the holder of the place was allowed to transfer, or in fact to sell it. And thus the venality of public offices, one of the most crying abuses of the old Monarchy, became re-established under the new, without the public being aware of it. In addition to these charges, Ministers proposed a new system of excise, with heavy duties upon iron, leather, oils, linens, paper, and the transport of merchandize.

The Finance Committee of the Royalist Chamber saw at once and fully the pernicious system of such taxes, and instantly and unanimously set them aside, replacing them by augmenting the direct taxation on townspeople, of patent tax, window tax, and that on moveables. In short, they pulled to pieces the budget of Count Corvetto, Minister of Finance, and substituted a completely new one of their own in its stead. So much was this the case, that the legists of the Chamber, accused the Royalists of violating the Charter, by showing their contempt of the royal initiative, which was one of its principles, and substituting an initiative of their own. It was true enough, and yet the Royalist chief, Villele, defended himself by asking whether Govern-

ment sought to reduce the Chamber of Deputies of the Monarchy to the state of the Legislative Body of the Empire, whose task was to listen to Ministerial speeches, and register imperial decrees, without answering the one or discussing the other?

The most disputed part of the financial scheme was the mode of dealing with the arrears. The Chamber regarded these in a light very different from the Ministry. The latter by paying honestly the debts incurred during past Governments, sought to do justice and strengthen public credit. The Chamber cared little for credit or the capitalist. It saw in the creditors of the State, merely men who had lent money to the Government of the Usurper, and whom, in consequence, they had no objection to mulct. They felt angry with their Bonapartist predecessors of 1814, for having stipulated to pay the arrears of that time in bonds at eight per cent., with a large portion of the national forests assigned for their payment and security. These forests, still remaining to the nation, had been for the most part Church property. The present Royalist Chamber meditated restoring them to the Church. They therefore set aside and rejected the settlement of the arrears in 1814, prohibited the sale or mortgage of woods, and bade Government pay the holders of arrears by inscriptions on the Great Book of the Debt at five per cent. When it was complained, that this would rob the creditor of half his due, the more furious than honest M. de Bonald exclaimed in the Chamber, "What creditor is ever paid integrally what is due to him? Do farmers pay landlords all they stipulate? Why then should the State?"

Whilst thus severe to the Imperialist creditors—whilst raising every obstacle and chicane to Laffitte's pre-

serving or selling the inscriptions of *rente* (which he had received in return for the two millions advanced to the army in the end of June, 1815), whilst equally striving to make Ouvrard disgorge the two millions sterling *rentes* he had received for furnishing the army of Napoleon, the Chamber eagerly and readily voted the sum demanded for a sinking fund. They had the true territorial horror of a public debt. They showed the jealousy of the same class against functionaries. They examined every department of the public service with a scrutinizing eye, passed the most stringent laws against persons holding two places at once, abolished useless places, and curtailed salaries with an alacrity, which the same class has always shown with us in England when circumstances have detached them from the Government of the day. Their aversion to the excise was a salutary principle of the same kind; and in their discussion of the law of customs, the French squires and landed party of the Chamber of 1815, showed a degree of wisdom and consideration not confined to their own interests. They insisted and laboured their utmost to remove or diminish duties on raw materials of manufactures, and showed themselves far more alive to the prrinciples of free trade, than the Chambers of subsequent years, in which the commercial and manufacturing interests came to acquire a larger share of numbers and preponderance.

After a protracted struggle, Ministers said they could not hope to conquer the determination of the Deputies. These would not allow of the payment of the arrears by either selling the old Church woods, or burdening land with exorbitant taxation. The fact of throwing so much land into the market depreciated its value, and prevented the sale as well as swallowed the produce. Ministers, there-

fore, succumbed, proceeded to pay the arrears by inscriptions at five per cent., and accepted the permission, which the Chamber gave unasked, to create six millions of *rentes*, that is, to raise a loan to the amount of so much interest. Having thus described the vain attempts of the Richelieu Ministry to carry a single measure of policy, it remains to show the attempts of the majority of the Chamber to advance their own private and peculiar ends of legislation.

However uncertain were the views of the Royalists at the commencement of the session, and however more serious considerations were lost in a mad thirst for vengeance, the party began by degrees to conceive and pursue a plan for bringing their revolutionized country to the state they desired. The aim of Villele, as developed in the electoral law, was to establish councils of departments chosen by the body of proprietors or tenants paying fifty francs direct taxation. These proprietors, with the larger ones of the Departmental Council, were to fill the offices of the district, form its council, and not only distribute the quota of general taxation, but also keep the budget and the expenditure of local taxation distinct from the general funds under the control of Government. There is great reason to regret, that the Royalists did not partially succeed in plans of this kind, which would have created a great degree of provincial independence and intelligence, interested the country gentlemen in free and constitutional government, and served as a successful counterpoise in after-times to the headlong zeal and spirit of town populations, which hurried the country into rash acts of revolution, and resistance. Success in establishing provincial independence and preponderance would have been the

less to be feared, since, however it might have increased Royalist influence in some provinces, it would give power in as great a number of departments to proprietors and wealthy classes, which were not affected by any traditions of noblesse, and which were in nowise separated or distinguished from that great current of liberal opinion formed by the Revolution, and visible in the great mass of the civic populations.

An adroit policy on the part of the Royalists might indeed have proved to the provincials, and even to the Liberals of towns, that they were as much interested as the landed proprietor in establishing a certain degree of local independence. But the cry for blood against the military, the contempt of public liberties shown in the prevôtal courts, the fanaticism and adulation shown by the Deputies in Paris, created a feeling of disgust and revolt in the general mind. The errors and crimes of the Revolution were what most Frenchmen were ready to repudiate and condemn, but these were cast up to the nation as an irredeemable sin, coupled with the other sins of equality, freedom, and military glory, so that the French began to admire the energetic deeds of the Revolution, sanguinary as they were, which, had they been untaunted and unprovoked, they would have viewed with just condemnation. Revolutionary fanaticism was, in fact, dead, until Royalist fanaticism awoke it; and the one extreme, instead of crushing and extinguishing the other, on the contrary communicated to it new inveteracy and life.

No part of the Royalists' conduct had more influence in producing this effect than their endeavours on behalf of the priesthood. Napoleon had restored the Church; he made

a Concordat with the Pope, placed a curate in every village, and a bishop in every large town. But his doing so offended none save the incorrigible Jacobins. For the clergy under Napoleon were confined to their religious duties; they were allowed to meddle neither with politics, nor education, nor patronage. They created no envy, but filled their useful, charitable, and pious functions, even in irreligious districts to the general content. But the first complaint of the Royalists was that a salaried priesthood was worthless. The Church, they said, should form a corporation or body in the State, and to do this should have property, and of course, landed property. This aroused the fears of all who had bought Church property.

As early as December, M. de Castebajac proposed to restore to the clergy the power of being legatees and possessors of landed property. From the commencement of the century to 1816, upwards of twenty millions of francs had been bequeathed to hospitals, because the clergy were not allowed to be the objects of such pious bequests. It was something if in another quarter of a century the French clergy might inherit a million sterling of revenue. The next step was to propose the restoration of its unsold property to the Church. In vain did the Government seek to check the zeal and satisfy the desires of the champions of the clergy by devoting five millions of francs more annually to the salaries of the clergy. They were not satisfied, and it was moved to convert the stipend into a *rente* arising from landed property. Government had it in its power to defeat or retard these laws, which involved financial operations of some magnitude; but the zeal of the ecclesiastical party knew no rest. M. de Bonald carried his law abolishing divorce, thus running

the pen through some hundred articles of the Code. Another moved to restore the register of births, deaths, and marriages to the clergy. One of the liberal acts of the ministry had been to establish a Council of the University, in lieu of the old Grand Master, with so liberal and enlightened a man as Royer Collard at its head, and with Protestants, such as Cuvier, members of the Council. But motions were made and carried in the Chamber of Deputies censuring and overturning these arrangements, and ordering, that as religion is the sole basis of education, colleges and schools ought to be under the guardianship of the prelates, who were to nominate their principals, the principals in turn nominating the professors.

No good or honest intentions on the part of such a Chamber could have saved the country from the alternative of beholding itself deprived of every advantage gained and achieved by the Revolution, or of the whole people rising up in arms to defend their rights as well as the cherished habits and conquests of the preceding quarter of a century. Both the King and his two most trusted Ministers saw that such a Chamber would soon conduct every Government to the verge of a precipice. On an occurrence when the Chamber, or a deputation of it, brought to Louis XVIII. some extravagant expression of its loyalty and love of kings, the monarch observed, no one can now tell whether in sincerity or irony, that such a Chamber was *introuvable*, apparently impossible to find nor to replace. The epithet was too good to be lost; and the Chamber of 1815 was known to its contemporaries, and will be remembered in French history, as the *Chambre Introuvable*.

Intending never to allow such a Chamber to assemble

again, it was necessary for the King, and the Ministers in his confidence, to get rid of those of their colleagues who belonged to the majority, and who followed the counsels of the Count D'Artois. M. Vaublanc, Minister of the Interior, had, in the course of debate, broken with the rest of the Cabinet, by declaring that he preferred certain parts of the budget presented by the Commission to that which he was bound to support as Minister. But he had committed a far more serious act. The Count D'Artois had been appointed Lieutenant-general of the National Guards of the kingdom, as an honourable post and title. But the Home Minister enabled the Prince to convert this title into a very important department, the Commander of the National Guards, first appointing or influencing its high officers and commanders in the provinces, and then entering into a regular correspondence with them. The Count D'Artois thus sought to replace the Royal Commission, by means of whom, in 1815, he had controlled the departments and their elections. With M. de Polignac for his secretary, and divers inspectors-general, his Royal Highness was proceeding to organize and marshal the National Guards under his banner, as he had already done with respect to the majority in the Chamber itself. It was resolved to get rid of M. Vaublanc; the difficulty was to find a worthy successor. The Duc de Richelieu fixed upon his friend M. Lainé, President of the Chamber, so lately insulted by its majority. Lainé, a timid man, refused the office, but more fully informed and reassured, he accepted it, and in a week after the prorogation of the Chamber, which took place in the last days of April, M. Lainé replaced M. Vaublanc as Minister of the Interior. M.

Barbé Marbois at the same time gave up the Ministry of Justice to M. Dambray, who held the place in 1814. The change is not now so remarkable in itself as in its having occasioned the removal of M. Guizot from the secretaryship, and the appointment of M. Trinquelague in his place: so blind was the Richelieu ministry to the talents of the future statesman, or else so much afraid were they of his zeal!

The marriage of the King's younger nephew, the Duke of Berry, to a daughter of the King of Naples, had communicated some gaiety to a dull and superannuated Court, and gave Louis XVIII. hopes of conciliating that large class of the Parisian tradespeople who profit by balls and expenditure. The monarch having just got rid of the fiery Chamber of Deputies and the Minister who partook of its zeal, was more at liberty to pardon general officers, who, like Travot, were condemned to death by courts-martial. From such thoughts he was aroused by the news of a military insurrection. There was no part of France, which felt more sensibly the reverses of 1815 than the valley of Grenoble. A frontier district, animated by the presence of a large garrison, the spirit of the department was military. Men and youth had all served in the army. Every peasant had been a soldier. The town of Grenoble itself had been imbued with the fiercest revolutionary sentiments, which instead of dying out or subsiding to a contrary extreme, as was the case at Marseilles and the towns westward of the Rhone, had endured; so that the sentiments of civilians, as well as soldiers, were in Grenoble hostile to the Bourbons. Labedoyère had marched from its gates to join Napoleon: the execution of the young and gallant colonel had made a

deep impression in the town. The great valley, which is commanded by the fortress, extends northward into a mountain district, of which Chambery is the chief town. Chambery and its district had been cut off from France by the Treaty of 1815, and thus the territory of the good people of Grenoble was mutilated, foreign soldiers and customs' guards occupying the place of friends. In addition to this the prisons were filled with suspected persons, under the new law of arrest, without form of trial. The Prevôtal Court was established at Grenoble as elsewhere, and whoever was suspected of Bonapartism was liable, at the least, to be ordered to remove to the most distant part of France. Such acts of the Government and the dominant party were the collecting of combustibles in every town. It required but one bold individual to strike forth a spark, in order to set the whole community in a flame.

There was unfortunately at Grenoble one of those restless spirits, which from temperament or from a life of feverish vicissitude are eager for everything that promises excitement. Paul Didier had been throughout his life the dupe of every political hallucination. A revolutionist, a reactionist, a republican, a Bonapartist, a fanatic royalist, a Bonapartist again, and then an Orleanist; he had gone round the compass of political attachments and opinions. He had been with Louis XVIII. when a hopeless exile, and been leagued with military conspirators to prevent that monarch's return, when that return was inevitable. Money, indeed, seemed not his object. He obtained several good places and positions. He was professor at Grenoble at one time, and had a lucrative office of business at another for recovering the property of emigrants. The year 1815 found him in Paris, at a time when the attitude assumed

by the Duke of Orleans in the Chamber of Peers somewhat alarmed the Court and Government as to the intentions of that Prince. The sitting of the Chamber of Peers was, however, with closed doors, and the public knew little of what passed within. The Duke's friends, seeing the ire of the Court, advised him to appeal to the public, by printing an account of his conduct and a report of his speeches. Didier was selected as a fit person to draw up and publish the pamphlet. But the Duke of Orleans, alarmed at the consequences, drew back, and the original documents for the pamphlet were taken out of the hands of Didier.

Didier was not deterred by the timidity of the Duke from thinking that his name was a good one, and might be made the pivot of insurrection. The difficulty of the time for those who sought to overthrow the King and effect a revolution was to combine military and civilian, Bonapartist and Constitutionalists. The cause and the ideas of both classes were up to the close of 1815 quite distinct; but the persecution and extravagance of the Royalists, of their Chamber, and of the Government at its bidding, had united Bonapartists and Constitutionalists, especially in the provinces, under the common and vague name of Liberal. To represent both, Didier formed or pretended to be the emissary of a society called that of national independence.

Early in 1816 Didier became suspected by the Royalist authorities of his native town and valley. He was therefore compelled to lurk about and lead an errant life, which of itself led him to become a conspirator. The proprietor of every home around Grenoble was a soldier and a Bonapartist. Didier opened his views to a veteran officer, named Quaix, better known as the Dromedary, from some

feat of his Egyptian campaigns. At the house of Quaix he met crowds of half-pay officers, whom Didier harangued on behalf of national independence, saying that France should be freed from the yoke of the English and the King they had imposed. When Didier did not clearly announce what king he would put in the place of Louis XVIII. the old officers remonstrated; and the conspirator, not daring to broach to them the name of the Duke of Orleans, adopted that of Napoleon II. But this whilst it satisfied some, alarmed others, who complained that this was but a name, not a person, since Napoleon II. was but a child, and moreover the captive of Austria. Never fear, Didier was wont to reply, let us first make the insurrection successful, and I promise it shall find a fitting chief.

Such was the readiness to revolt, that a whole district was thus induced to fly to arms, in what name and to what end they knew not, under the leadership of a brave perhaps but of a very crazy and inconsistent personage. Didier inspired so little confidence to the Liberals of the town of Grenoble, that they refused to have anything to do with him. His fellows and followers were reduced to the disbanded soldiers and officers scattered about in the villages of the thinly-peopled valley. Of these and of the peasantry Didier counted at least nearly 4000 men in his secret, which was moreover known to many of the citizens of Grenoble, who disapproved of the scheme. But the Prefect and the Royalist general, their secretary and staff, isolated from the inhabitants of the province, knew nothing whatever of what was passing around them; and Didier's army, himself at its head, was in full march, armed and eager, upon Grenoble, after nightfall of the 1st of May, when the mayor of one of the villages traversed by the insurgents,

mounted his horse, and by a circuitous route succeeded in reaching the town and warning the Prefect of the approach of a rebel army.

The Prefect, Count de Montlivault, and General Donnadieu, who commanded in Grenoble, had both served Napoleon. The Prefect had ever shown zeal in the Emperor's cause, whilst the General had incurred his disgrace for intrigues and acts of insubordination. Both were now zealous to prove their fidelity to the Bourbons Donnadieu had scarcely rushed out, on the first alarm, when he encountered an officer, armed to the teeth, and evidently bent on joining the insurrection. Rendered certain of the attack, the General, full of zeal, collected what National Guards and soldiers of the Departmental Legion he could depend on, and ordered them to march straight upon the rebels. He then summoned the newly-formed regiments of the Isère, for the regiments by number had been broken up, and the soldiers collected in legions of the same departments, as was the case before the Revolution. The commandant, Colonel Vautré, was ordered to march also to check the rebels. These, in the mean time, had driven in and dispersed the troops sent in the first instance against them, and were pursuing the fugitives, in disorder, through the many bridges and gates of the fortified town of Grenoble. At this moment, Colonel Vautré and his regiment came upon the insurgents. The word to fire was given; the soldiers hesitated for several minutes, and had even Didier, or some known old soldier, advanced to harangue them, they perhaps would have turned away from repressing a Bonapartist rising; but the foremost band of the insurgents fled—each of the officers seized a musket and fired. The soldiers, by degrees, imitated them, and obeyed the word

of command; and when the second corps or division of insurgents came in better order, led by Didier himself, they were received with a full volley by the regiment. This dispersed the remainder of the insurgents. For a few moments Didier sought to rally them: it was in vain. They fled along the road, whilst he took shelter and made his escape by the wood. Half an hour sufficed to extinguish an insurrection so serious, that it had burst forth by bringing four thousand men to the very gates of Grenoble, without the authorities being fully aware or more than casually prepared; but Colonel Vautré and General Donnadieu, in magniloquent dispatches, gave themselves credit, not only for having defeated a formidable insurrection, but for having quenched it in blood. The General declared the roads to be covered with corpses. Colonel Vautré boasted that he had forbidden the soldiers to fire, in order to slaughter the *canaille* with the point of the bayonet. Both announced that they had taken a large number of prisoners, of whom the Prevotal Courts would make but short work.

There were upwards of five hundred prisoners. It happened that four were taken with arms in their hands. They were brought the next day before the court of the Prevot, who, showing rudeness in his interrogatories, was apostrophized by one of the prisoners, as "that Planta, who had been the most furious of Bonapartists—singing the Marseillaise, and inciting the youth of his village to join the Emperor!" Two of those said to be taken with arms in their hands were proved never to have been in the combat at all. One was called David; the other two were executed. Meantime the orders of Ministers, conveyed by telegraph, placed fifteen departments in a state of siege.

A sum was offered for the capture of Didier dead or alive. The inhabitants of the house in which he should be found were menaced with being instantly shot. The Prevotal Court, appearing slow in its procedure, a court-martial was formed, with Colonel Vautré as its president. Thirty peasants, captured in the rout, were brought before it. The Colonel would scarcely allow any advocate to speak; but an officer on the court-martial, Lieutenant Benoit, exerted himself to save the innocent. Twenty-one were condemned, more than half of them young men of 20; there was one of 19, one of 18, and one of 16. There was so little proof against five of them, who were taken with merely sticks in their hands, that the Court recommended them to mercy. The sentence was telegraphed to Paris.

The answer of the Police Minister was not what that of a Minister ought to have been in a question of life and death. It said, "That no pardon should be extended except to those who made revelations, and that the twenty-one prisoners, as well as David, should be executed."

M. Decazes could not have been informed of the circumstances of the judgment. As the tribunal had admitted there was no proof of guilt, and had condemned merely because it was told, it could also recommend to mercy and save. The twenty-one prisoners were marched off to execution, those admitted to be innocent as well as those acknowledged to be guilty. The boy of 16, Miard, stood amongst the devoted lot. When the fire of the soldiers had swept down all, the boy, Miard, who was slightly wounded, raised himself on his hands, and seemed to ask for life; a second discharge was the only answer vouchsafed to the boy. Not all the waters of the rapid Isére, which

runs through Grenoble, could wash away, in the minds of the citizens of that town (who witnessed these executions, and knew the circumstances of them,) the blood unfortunately left on the cause and the agents of the Bourbons, so blundering in their zeal, so ruthless in their precipitation. The Ministers of the moment, the Duc de Richelieu and M. Decazes, were risking their public position and fortune in a struggle against the ultra-Royalist reactionists, for the sake of securing more liberty to the nation, and more mercy and justice to fallen parties; but now the Government, panic-struck at their responsibilities, remarking with what ease the Bourbons were overthrown a year previously, mainly by the act of this very city and garrison of Grenoble, allowed themselves to sanction and send ruthless orders, which, in the hands of unscrupulous and sanguinary agents, threw a slur and a shame upon the royal cause almost as great as the massacres of Nismes and Uzes.

Didier, the criminal and infatuated author of all this bootless bloodshed, had in the meantime escaped to the mountains, which rise on the other side of the valley of Grenoble, and which form the frontier of Savoy. Though badly wounded, he contrived to pass the frontier with three of those most implicated in his attempt. In their misfortunes and sufferings they reproached Didier with the false promises he had held out, that Marie Louise was to appear, and to bring the King of Rome with her to be their monarch and leader. Such promises it was evident were shams; and his companions pressed Didier to avow who he intended to be their chief. He admitted that his hopes rested on the Duke of Orleans.—"But what is he, after all, but a Bourbon?" cried the dupes of

Didier: "We would as soon have had Louis XVIII.!" "Well," said Didier, "we might have proclaimed the Republic!" With such puerility of purpose, such utter ignorance of men and of things, was a man able to raise four thousand men to rebel, and then abandon them to their fate. Didier's companions, indignant at his folly and duplicity in sacrificing them to a Bourbon, instantly left him, and as soon as opportunity occurred, betrayed who he was. An innkeper, Balmain, learning it, hastened to inform the police of the neighbouring village of St. Jean de Maurienne: they immediately seized Didier, who was brought first to Turin, and then to Grenoble. Didier, confronted with death, showed himself to be as firmly courageous as rashly adventurous. General Donnadieu pressed him for revelations. He had none to give. He merely bade the King beware of the Duke of Orleans and Prince Talleyrand, and if possible exile them both. French historians of the time, revolutionists naturally, but even the Royalist Lamartine, seek to make a hero and a martyr of Didier, and both feel and excite great interest in his fate. Yet the adventurer, who had made himself the instrument and servitor of every cause and every prince, who practised conspiracy apparently less from any principle or for any end, than from the love of conspiracy for itself—who, without a rational aim, a real leader or chance of success, exposed the lives of thousands of brave men, all of whom he induced to rise by deception and falsehood—such a man, we must say, deserved his fate a hundredfold, and far from having established any claim to either heroism or martyrdom by his rash and unwarrantable act, merits, on the contrary, every stigma that can be fixed on those vain men, who injure a good

cause, and sacrifice better men to their own restless temper or love of notoriety.

Whilst the public of the capital was still in agitation from the accounts of this abortive insurrection of Grenoble, and the terrible vengeance taken on those who were unhappily engaged in it, the rumour ran that another plot, or a ramification of the provincial one, had been discovered in Paris. The facts were little known until the chiefs of the conspiracy were brought to trial. These were Plaignier, Carbonneau, and Tolleron, a bootmaker, a man who wrote letters for those who could not write themselves, and an engraver. These were to distribute three-cornered cards with the words Honour and Liberty upon them, and had got up a proclamation assuring people that they were about to save the country. They followed up such puerile acts by discussing in pothouses the best means of liberating the country. A man present proposed to roll some barrels of powder up a sewer that communicated between the river and the palace. Those afterwards accused, asserted that no one made this proposal, except a man named Scholtein, who was connected with the police; and, unfortunately, Scholtein was not produced or produceable on the trial. With such lame evidence, and from such facts as these, the three artisans were condemned to the penalty of parricides, that is, walk to the scaffold in their shirts, and have their hands chopped off before they were executed. Seventeen others who had the misfortune to be present in the cabarets frequented by these men, or were connected with the distribution of these cards, suffered transportation. The very writers who give testimony in favour of the Government of that day, and who had all its information at their disposal to

defend such trials and executions, cannot make out crimes worthy of more than being exposed to the shame of the pillory. The conspiracy was a farce, but the Government, or its panic, which police agents criminally fed, made of it a fearful and disgusting tragedy.

The several Courts-martial, which in different provincial towns were called upon to pass judgment upon general officers excepted from the amnesty, were calculated, some of them, still more to excite the national disgust. Thus in the trial of General Debelle, at Lyons, and still more of General Travot, at Rennes, the military authorities, who commanded and who sought to ingratiate themselves with the Government by vigour, displayed an equal contempt of decorum as of justice. The noted foe and antagonist of Travot, in the wars of La Vendée, was purposely made President of the Court to try him, whilst the advocates who offered to defend him were exiled and sent off for the contemptuous act. Travot was of course condemned as well as Debelle. But Government pardoned them: General Drouet was rescued by Macdonald; Cambronne saved himself by his bluntness. Until the events of Grenoble occurred, Ministers leaned to mercy; afterwards they were flung into the common current of ultra-Royalist vindictiveness. General Mouton Duvernet was shot, and all the generals who had escaped were condemned, as *contumaces*, to death, and rased from the list of the army.

In the midst of these executions and condemnations throughout the kingdom, was celebrated, in the month of June, the marriage of the Duke of Berry with the Princess Caroline of Naples. Not a single act of pardon commemorated that ceremony, although the Duke of Berry was no sanguinary man. The only act connected with

the marriage, indeed, was the promotion of the Duke of Feltre, of Bournonville, the Duke de Coigny, and General Viomenil, who had exiled the Rennes advocates for daring to defend General Travot, to the rank of Marshals. One of the historians of France under Louis XVIII., M. de Vaulabelle, a man initiated in all the secrets and supplied with all the information of the Liberal and Bonapartist faction, has been able to fill almost half of one of his volumes with descriptions, scarcely contested, of the desperate vindictiveness, extravagance, and indecorous contempt of all justice shown by officers and agents, anxious to recommend themselves to the power in the ascendant, by inflicting every possible rigour and taking every possible advantage of the unfortunate individuals of the proscribed and vanquished party. There is quite as much matter for disgust and indignation in these pages, as in those which contain the crimes of the early Revolutionists; and they remain a melancholy storehouse of tales of reaction, unforgiveness, and blood, still reserved for the Royalist party, whenever they may again recover footing or ascendancy in France.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DOCTRINAIRES AND CHATEAUBRIAND—ORDONNANCE OF SEPTEMBER 5, DISSOLVING CHAMBER, AND MODIFYING THE RULE OF ELECTION—DECAZES' POLICY OF THE BASCULE—DEBATE ON FINANCE—LAW ESTABLISHING DIRECT ELECTION INTRODUCED AND PASSED—LIBERTY OF THE PERSON AND OF THE PRESS—PSEUDO-INSURRECTION AT LYONS—MARMONT'S MISSION, AND FABVIER'S EXPOSURE OF IT.

ALTHOUGH during the summer of 1816 the King and his Ministers were flung back into the tide of reaction and cruelty by the events of Grenoble, as much by the terror which they first excited as by the necessity which they felt of not allowing the ultra-Royalists any grounds for accusing them either of lukewarm loyalty or want of vigour in crushing conspiracy, still the Cabinet and the Sovereign were not the less anxious to escape from the fanatic, ultra-royalist influence, which impelled them in a direction unsafe and unwise. The severity of the Ministers towards insurgents did not deceive or satisfy the ultras. The Comte d'Artois was menaced with the deprival of his command of the National Guard. Instead of recurring to the politicians of the Pavillon Marsan for counsel, the Monarch and his Ministers held frequent conferences with the moderate statesmen who had begun

their political career under the Empire, and who were Monarchists more than Bourbonists.

The connexion of Louis XVIII. with these men is thus described by Lamartine. "The King and M. Decazes had too much foresight not to descry in the exiled and retrograde party of the Court and of the Chamber, the storm which was forming against them. They sought a natural counterpoise against such enmity, who, from ambition as well as affection, had rallied to the monarchy, although their past life rendered them incompatible with the resuscitation of the old *régime*. Most of them were men of Government, rather than of principle—of families attached to ancient royalty, but induced to serve the Empire by its greatness, separating from the latter in its fall, and rekindling in 1814 the old devotion of their name for the Bourbons. These men kept aloof in 1815; but, drawn closer to M. Decazes by similarity of origin, they sought, through his favour with the monarch, to remount the broken rounds of fortune's ladder. These were Pasquier, Molé, Barante, Mounier, Villemain, Guizot, Angles; some accustomed to frequent political changes and moderate from very weariness—others younger, owing their moderation to high and sound views. All, remarkable by their talents and prospects, formed the nucleus of an intermediary party, destined to increase and extend, because it took the same position with the King, that to where the majority of men rally after a revolution, half way between extreme parties, offering security to one side—satisfaction to the other—guarantees to all. One of them, superior to the rest by years and authority, Royer Collard, a philosopher and a politician, covered them with the mysteries of his conception, the dignity of his life, and

the weight of his aphorisms. He was the Sièyes, concentrated and taciturn, of the rising party. Every religion needs an oracle. Royer Collard was the oracle, however yet obscure, of that active and equivocal sect which was known later under the name of *Doctrinaire.*"

As yet neither these, nor the more thorough liberals behind them, had made any appeal to the public. The Electoral law had not opened the tribune of the Chamber to either. The press was fettered, and in Royalist hands. The *Censeur Européen*, the only attempt at periodical publication, was courageous, but formal and dull, and too abstract for the passions of the day. Chateaubriand had employed his time since the closing of the Chamber in writing a political pamphlet, which expressed all the griefs of the Royalist majority. The burden of this essay was the folly and the crime of Ministers and of the King, in supposing that there were revolutionary or other than royalist interests in France which it was necessary to conciliate. "All Frenchmen are Royalists," exclaimed Chateaubriand: "the few that are not must be made so. To suppose that there exists any other opinion is falsehood and madness as well as crime." That there was any portion of the population which it was impolitic to disgust and dangerous to offend by summary execution of men, guilty of being Bonapartists, by proscriptions of others slightly suspected, by restoring the clergy to wealth and power, by the ousting of all old functionaries and the substitution of new—all this Chateaubriand denied. The principle, upon which he and his party went was to ignore the existence of three-fourths of the French people. If what Chateaubriand alleged were true, why not establish really free elections, and why should not Royalism fling

itself on the country which so worshipped it. Chateaubriand's *Monarchie selon la Charte* was in fact a blind party publication, very unlike other more liberal effusions of his, in which whilst denouncing Bonapartism and revolutions, he still insisted on the liberty of the press, the observance of the Charter, and on the strength which both Crown and aristocracy would derive from a fairly-developed constitutional system.

It was, indeed, possible for a zealot like Chateaubriand to deceive himself, and to believe that there was none but Royalist opinions in France, for no other had, at the time, the power or the opportunity of expression. The Royalist Chamber weighed upon the country like a nightmare, forbade all publicity, all opinion, even all exclamations, save its own; so that in order to give any freedom of opinion, of publicity, or of election, it was necessary to dissolve the Chamber. This the King and his counsellors meditated and discussed. The Duc de Richelieu disliked to break with the entire Royalist party, and Louis shrunk from an inevitable breach with the members of his family, all of them astride of lofty plans of reaction. But Lainé, Pasquier, Simeon, and Decazes expressed confidence in the result. Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian ambassador, approved of it. The Allied Powers found the annual payment of the large sums due to them obstructed by the refusal of the Chamber, either to vote taxes or to facilitate a loan for the honest and full repayment of arrears. The Emperor Alexander was induced to write to Louis XVIII. that it would be wise to shake off the influence of stultified ultra-royalism. And on the morning of the 5th of September, an ordonnance appeared in the *Moniteur* dissolving the Chamber, and assuming, as the pretext for

doing so, the wish of the King not to infringe upon or depart from the Charter.

"Since our return to the kingdom," said the monarch's ordonnance, "each has demonstrated the truth of what we proclaimed on a solemn occasion, that the advantages of improvement were always accompanied by the dangers of innovation. We are aware that the requirement and wishes of our subjects necessitate the preservation of the constitutional Charter intact, as the basis of public right and the guarantee of general repose. We have in consequence judged it advisable to reduce the Chamber of Deputies to the number determined by the Charter, calling to it only those above forty years of age.* But to effect this reduction legally, it is indispensable to convoke the electoral colleges, in order to proceed to new elections."

The ordonnance then went on to rule, that no article of the Charter should be reversed; that the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved, and the number of Deputies to be the same as in 1814; their age forty; that the Electoral Colleges should remain as fixed by the ordonnance of July, 1815, that is, as formed under the Empire, the Prefects having liberty to add to them members of the Legion of Honour and persons otherwise notable.

The manner in which Ministers understood the electoral law may be conceived from their calculation, that every President of an Electoral College ought to be able to secure his own election as deputy. The choice of Presidents was not left, as before the previous elections, to the Duke d'Angoulême or the ultra-Royalists: moderate and minis-

* They were frequently eligible at twenty-five. It is singular that such a proviso should have been deemed useful against ultra-royalism; but the young zealots were more unmanageable than the old.

terialist Royalists were selected for these functions. There was, unfortunately, a lack of such men, at least of any eminence. As Departmental Colleges required either local greatness, or political eminence, young and merely able men, like Villemain and Guizot, would never be chosen, even if they were of the requisite age. Military men found no favour there, except with middle and lower classes; lawyers were still less acceptable to rustic electors. The wonder is, that the moderate Royalists could succeed under such difficulties and restrictions in obtaining a majority. The great towns, however, sent liberal members; Paris, for example, returned Laffitte. There was no need of awaiting the first votes of the Chamber in order to form a judgment of their probable result.

The ultra-Royalists were beyond measure furious. The Comte d'Artois declared the country lost for ever, and handed over once more to revolution. The Duchess d'Angoulême, ever falling from one excess of pious rage into another, refused to speak to the King, or to receive the Minister. The younger princes took the change more philosophically, and the Duke de Berry was even inclined to think the King right in dismissing a refractory Chamber. Chateaubriand was putting the last hand to his *Monarchie selon la Charte* when the ordonnance appeared. He on the instant added a violent postscript, denouncing the ordonnance, and the Minister who advised it. To save his loyalty, he insinuated that it could not have been the free act of the King, who must have signed such an edict under durance and compulsion. The police instantly seized the bold pamphlet, the author making what legal resistance he was able. Louis XVIII. blotted Chateaubriand's name off the list of Ministers of State, an

act which the noble writer in his Memoirs represents as having caused him to sell his library and his country house; he forgot to mention that the King and Government so expelling him from office, kindly left him the salary, or a pension equal to it. The Duc de Richelieu was one of those who blamed this persecution of the writer; but M. Decazes was inexorable, except so far as the pecuniary means of the publicist was concerned. In a subsequent debate in the Chamber, M. Decazes was accused of levying heavy annual sums from each of the journals, which it was said he deposited in his own pocket. M. Decazes, however, proved that the amount of the revenue derived from the journals, which by-the-by it forced greatly to augment their prices, was remitted to the King, and by him redistributed to different public writers, who thus derived from the royal hand a retribution which they might more honestly and directly have derived from the honest profits of their calling.

The dismissal of Chateaubriand had a sensible effect on the conduct of functionaries in the elections, and upon the elections generally. There was no mistaking or misrepresenting that the King was determined upon entering upon a new line of policy, in which moderate men would have more influence than fanatic Royalists. Many of these were accordingly set aside. Messrs. de Vitrolles, De la Tremouille, Polignac, Laborie, Forbin, De Maisonfort, were not returned. M. Decazes could not stand, not having attained the age of forty. Of two hundred and fifty deputies, of which the Chamber consisted, one hundred and sixty-eight had seats in the former one, and sixty-eight of them had been of the minority.

However secure of a majority, the ministry avoided

provoking the ultra-Royalists in the opening address. Many expressions particularly obnoxious to the fanatics, such as *liberte des cultes*, freedom of public worship, occurred in the royal speech.

"Attached by policy as by heart," said the King, "to the divine precepts of religion, let us also adhere to that Charter, which, without interfering with dogma, insures to the faith of our fathers its due pre-eminence, and which guarantees to all in secular affairs a wise liberty, and to every one the peaceful enjoyment of his rights, position, and property. I will never suffer any infringement of this fundamental law. My ordonnance of the 5th of September proves it. In conclusion, gentlemen, let hatred cease. Let the children of the same country, I may say of the same father, be truly a people of brethren. And let my people be assured of my unshakeable firmness to resist the attacks of malevolence as well as to check the extravagance of too ardent zeal."

Thus was inaugurated by M. Decazes what was called the policy of the *bascule*, or balance between parties, the Minister leaning upon the Liberals to check the madness of the ultra-Royalists, and appealing to the Royalists when it was felt necessary to check the aggression of the Liberals. In order to establish the balance fairly, and to find out the real *juste milieu*, as it was afterwards called, it would have been requisite for the King's ministers to allow a certain scope and development to the liberal party, and learn to tolerate in it not only moderate sentiments and aims, but even the extravagance which is inseparable from political party. Instead of taking any such large view, M. Decazes and the King would not consider any liberalism as allowable, which passed the bounds or the

language of philosophic royalism. They would go so far as to tolerate the liberalism of the Doctrinaires, but at opinions or names, which recalled the Revolution or savoured of the Empire, they recoiled in horror, as if it were not better to give expression to feelings that were really and deeply implanted in the mass of the population in order to satisfy what was rational and uneradicable, and correct what was extravagant, overweening, or wrong.

Such men as Royer Collard, Lainé, and De Serre did not give their adhesion to M. Decazes, and join his Cabinet, without making conditions. These were the mitigation of the too severe laws against liberty of the person and of the press, as well as a new electoral law. Before any of these could be brought before the Chamber, it was necessary to introduce a budget, and provide better for the heavy expenditure of the time as well as for the payment of the creditors, than the last Chamber of Deputies allowed. The financial statement, therefore, immediately followed the election of President and Vice-Presidents, and then the ultra-Royalists found themselves in a decided minority. Whilst there were 112 votes for De Serre, and 102 for Pasquier, Villele and Corbiere had but 91 and 76. The Vice-Presidents were all moderate Royalists, being Royer Collard, Camille Jordan, Simeon, and Beugnot. The disputed elections were decided in the same spirit. The same sweeping intolerance which the ultra-Royalist majority had shown in the last session were now meted to them; and M. Decazes, in his administrative acts, began to show as little ceremony towards the Royalists as the new majority in Parliament. He stopped their journals, and arrested their agitators. The Royalists, in consequence, raised a storm in the Chamber against the Minister of Police, and in the

discussion thus provoked, the ultra-Royalists, for the first time, joined in the demand of these liberties of the person and the press, for which, when dominant, they had shown utter contempt. An ultra-Royalist journal, belonging to one Robert, having been suspended in consequence of the arrest of its proprietor, a petition brought the question before the Chamber. M. Decazes, being written to, refused to give any information whatever. When this was demanded by a committee of the House, he acceded to their request, but fully proved the turbulence of the parties, and their amenability to the law which the ultra-Royalists had passed. These zealous conservatives had thus the opportunity of experiencing how exceptional and arbitrary powers, intrusted to a Government, may be made to gall and oppress even those who think themselves more remote from their action, and most unlikely to become their victims.

On the 14th of November M. Corvetto made his financial statement. In the interval of the Session, one of the few men in France who had been accustomed to handle large sums of money, chiefly in the supply of armies, M. Ouvrard, had placed himself in communication with the Duc de Richelieu and M. Decazes, as well as with the representatives of the Allied Powers. He insisted, first, on the re-establishment of public credit, as the basis of future loans, a necessity of which Ministers were fully aware. But how was that to be done, when all that Government had to offer to the holders of the arrears was to inscribe their claim on the Great Book of the Debt, at five per cent., when the stock bearing that interest was under sixty? Ouvrard suggested the payment of them as five per cent. obligations, to be reimbursed by series

after 1821, and to be valued according to the prices of stock at that period. This was a great improvement on the stingy half-payment voted by the last Chamber.

On one occasion M. Decazes had asked Ouvrard to supply the Government with sixty millions of francs. "I cannot give or procure the Government sixty millions," said the capitalist, "but I can get for it a *milliard*, if it so desired." "You cannot coin a crown out of a paradox, M. Ouvrard," observed the Minister, smiling. "Yet there is nothing so common as what I say," rejoined Ouvrard; "let a merchant who is embarrassed apply for help to a friend; the latter will not fail to demand how much he possesses, and what he owes. If he has wherewithal to liberate himself entirely, the friend will lend him the entire sum requisite to extricate him, whilst he will not risk a small sum, which allows the embarrassment to continue and become worse."

M. Ouvrard's idea was to create *rentes* or Stock to the amount of the seven or eight hundred million of francs required by foreign Powers. To get these Powers to be contented with three-fourths of their demand, in return for security and regularity of payment, was part of his plan. The remaining fourth would compensate bankers for taking the Stock, and parting with it only in such measure and at such times as would not seriously affect the market. The mere fact of such an arrangement as that of a great commercial house (for this was requisite) being engaged with the French Government in an operation of this kind, and the Allied Powers lending themselves to it, would alone raise the price of Stocks and consolidate credit. This scheme, which was explained by Ouvrard to the Duc de Richelieu and the Allied Powers, and for which he had

obtained the co-operation of the house of Baring, was not put in execution until the year 1817. But the idea and the prospect of what might be done influenced the Finance Minister so far back as November 1816, when he made his financial statement. He asked and obtained liberty to create thirty millions of *rentes*, in addition to the six granted at the commencement of the year. He, at the same time, doubled the sum allotted to the Sinking Fund, and added to that fund the obnoxious supplement and guarantee of the sale of the State Forests. The land-tax was maintained. The patent-tax on commercial classes was regulated and rendered less oppressive, although not diminished. Of the six excise taxes, proposed and rejected in the preceding Session, one only was persisted in, that assimilating oils to drinks; another was introduced, taxing public conveyances at one-fourth of their prices and places. With all this, the revenue being estimated at but 760 millions of francs, whilst the expenditure was estimated at upwards of a milliard (1,000,000,000 francs), there was one-fourth of the public expenditure to be supported by credit.

The statement explaining the views of the Government was referred to a Commission, which did not make its report till the end of January. The members of the Commission belonged of course to the new, not to the old majority. The only modifications which they proposed in the ministerial plan were, first, to refuse the doubling of the patent-tax, paid for the liberty of opening shop, which was put on during the previous year, as a temporary substitute for the excise duty rejected. Moreover, instead of devoting 150,000 hectares of forest to the support of the Sinking Fund, the Commission proposed to assign for that

purpose all the forests of the State.* This was a complete defiance to the party which destined the State Forests to the re-edification of the landed endowments of the Church.

These several dispositions of the Budget, as proposed by Ministers, and modified by the commission, became the great battle-field of debate for the remainder of the Session. Day after day the Chamber returned to it; every member who had a voice, spoke, or who had an objection, urged it. The powers of debate were called forth to the utmost, nor, however dry the subject, was it barren of passionate appeals. M. De Villele and his friends applied their acumen chiefly to the details of the financial plan, to the separate consideration, and often indeed to the improvement of each tax. In the matter of expenditure, the Royalists were the most ruthless economists. They were for abolishing the Council of State, diminishing the number of prefects, cashiering under-secretaries, and cutting off scores of posts and places as useless. In their ardour for doing away with places, they frequently proposed to centralize different functions, which led some to retort upon them, for abetting local influence in the last Parliament, and supporting centralization in this. The loan they denounced as impossible or ruinous, and then it was rumoured that a great portion of it had been taken by an English, a Dutch, and a French house, at the rate of 55 francs for the hundred. These exclamations and prognostications of the Royalists had some truth in them. When the Duc de Richelieu, however, was able to ascend the tribune, and to announce that the Allied Powers had consented to withdraw one-fifth of their armies of occupation, the announcement secured for

* The quantity of forest land in the possession of the State was 1,260,000 hectares, valued at from 600 to 650 francs the hectare.

him and for the ministry a full triumph over the multiplied attacks of opposition.

The great offence and grievance of the Budget, and, indeed, of the Session, was the proposal of the Commission to devote all the forests of the State to the hammer, and their produce to the Sinking Fund.

Laffitte, by an outburst against the clergy, in his first speech, did not mitigate hostile feelings.

"What claim," said he, "has the clergy on the forests of the country? Is it not too much to allow them the faculty, by which they are sure to profit, of acquiring property? What has wealth to do with evangelical charity? The Priesthood has lost in the Revolution! Who has not? Were not two-thirds of the property of the fundholder struck out and cancelled? Shall the losses caused by the *maximum*, or by the *assignats*, be reimbursed? Restitution now would be a second robbery!"

The proposal of the Commission nevertheless found much reluctance in the Chamber to sanction it; and when the article containing it came specially for discussion, it was so roughly handled that it was sent back to the Commission for amendment. When it was reproduced on the 4th of March, the article ran "that the Forests of the State were devoted to the Sinking Fund, with the exception of so much as was necessary to procure a net revenue of four millions of *rentes* to the church." This led to an animated and interesting debate, in which the most eloquent men of the Chamber took part. But the Royalists were not satisfied. Bonald led the way. A forest, said that orator, unlike any other kind of property, is the cradle of new generations—the asylum of the unfortunate, the most precious treasure of civilized races. It alone belongs to all

generations; and no one age has a right to demolish it for the sake of making beggarly farms. The nation is perishing of subdivision, so that we shall all die of hunger when each has an acre to cultivate; and you would augment the evil. Forests are to be cut up because they are too monarchic. To such strange arguments Camille Jordan replied, that it was barbarous to talk of keeping the French race in its primæval forests. It has always been held by the French lawyers and parliaments, that the goods of the Church were alienable, and Popes had often sanctioned the principle. A Royalist speaker, having declared that religion had unfortunately been an *emigré*, but an emigrant who, having returned, had a right to the restoration of his property; this called out M. Lainé, who pleaded that Christianity was not like Paganism, where people might carry off the gods of their country. Christianity was not concentrated at Coblentz, but had always remained in the hearts and communities of the French race. At length the law of the Sinking Fund, as proposed by the Commission, was voted, and thereby the principle of the Budget sanctioned. Its remaining portion gave rise to little debate. When the Customs' Tariff came, M. Beugnot alone insisted on taking off duties on the raw material of manufacture. M. Benoist opposed on the principle, that prohibition begat plenty. Another member, of the same way of thinking, proposed to raise the duty on iron to 75 francs the 100 lbs. The Ministers replied, that at the existing duty, which was but one-half of that proposed, the importation of 1815 and of 1816 had been small: it in fact at the time amounted to prohibition.

Although the Minister's financial statement opened the Session, and the discussion of the Budget completely occu-

pied its last months, a struggle as important between the same parties took place on the new law of election, brought forward by the Home Minister, M. Lainé. That law was simple and brief. It declared that all persons paying 300 francs of direct taxes should be electors; that all the electors of a department should meet at its principal town, and there choose the number of deputies allotted to the department. Those only who paid 1,000 francs of taxes could be elected. The great change was the substitution of direct for indirect election. It was considered a bold experiment even by Ministers themselves; and in order to guard against any too sweeping effect, the mode of parcelling the election, and renewing the Chamber each year by one-fifth, was preserved.

Such was the law of election, produced by those royalist Liberals whom Lamartine calls the Doctrinaires. They were better known afterwards as the Right Centre, from the position which they occupied in the Chamber of Deputies, when that Chamber was opened to contain all shades of opinion. It was a bold and ingeniously devised attempt a once to lessen the influence of the great proprietors in the provinces as well as that of the commonalty, and to raise up the middle, and by consequence the commercial, classes, to a larger share of political influence than previous elections had allowed them. The first objection of the more sagacious of the Royalists was, that the law threw the whole electoral influence of France into the hands of those who paid from 300 to 500 francs annual taxes. The rich landowner or powerful manufacturer had much more influence over the primary electors paying 50 francs than he could have amongst his fellows, and probably his rivals, paying 300. A list at the same time was prepared by the

Prefects, and gave 90,000 electors throughout the kingdom, paying 300 francs, and 16,000 eligible, paying the 1,000. The part of the plan which was most unfavourable to the squirearchy was, the election taking place in the capital of the department, instead of its being divided amongst the different towns of arrondissement; in the latter case the electors not quitting their homes, had but the influence of their locality about them, and gave their votes for the little great men of their canton. But when the electors were to meet at the chief town, the local notabilities would be set aside for the candidates of a higher character, of more universal and civic reputation.

These, the real objections, however, the Royalists did not state; they, on the contrary, took liberal grounds, and talked of the disfranchisement of the poorer electors paying 50 francs. M. Corbiere said, that Constitutional Government was a deception, unless every interest was represented; and he well might denounce the 90,000 payers of 300 francs as an aristocracy. Nor did the objection come solely from the ultra-Royalist side. M. De Serre insisted upon town as well as country representatives. He said the towns should have municipal liberty and electoral corporations; and in departments which had more than one deputy, all the citizens of towns above 1,500 souls should form one college to elect a deputy, leaving the rural electors to choose the other. Lainé himself, in the previous Session, had been for having elections by different corporations of trades and professions; but on this subject he was silent now. Camille Jordan insisted that, with so few electors, the representation might be vitiated by members absenting themselves. The House proposed to make voting compulsory. Castelbajac, a Royalist, pointed out the inequality of the scheme, which

considered the 13,000 electors of the Seine department as no more than the 140 of the Upper Pyrenees. The Royalist opposition tried its force in an amendment, substituting the greatest tax-payers up to a certain number, instead of all paying 300 francs. The attempt to restore an aristocracy of electors failed; and the law was passed without even a division. There was more difficulty in getting it through the Chamber of Peers, where the Prelates had taken their seats, and began to exercise their influence. The King, however, made use of personal effort and injunction, and direct election became the law of the land.

The statutes, restricting liberty of the person, subjecting acts of sedition and turbulence to *prévôtal* courts and summary punishment, and giving unlimited power of arrest to authorities in general, was another point on which the liberal friends of the Ministry required some mitigation. All the amendments, however, that M. Decazes thought advisable, were to deprive inferior agents of the power of arrest without interrogatory, and without trial by regular tribunal immediately following. The power M. Decazes now proposed to limit to the Prefect of Police, his warrants being countersigned by the President of the Council. The Police Minister prefaced the discussion upon the amended law by a statement of the use which had been made of the power of arbitrary arrest. In the first month there had been from 200 to 220 individuals throughout the kingdom imprisoned under the law; latterly, their number did not exceed thirty. The present year was, however, according to the Ministers, not a time for Government to dispense with all powers. Commercial prosperity and activity of employment had by no means returned, as was expected, on the traces of peace. The consequence of invasion, and of

change from war to peace, and one government to another, had not been removed; and providence had been pleased to add famine to the other ills which beset the poor. Whilst the more liberal members, such as Camille Jordan and De Serre were willing, on these grounds, to allow the Ministers the exceptional power which they demanded, the ultra-Royalists opposed the demand, and upon liberal grounds. They refused to sanction the continuance of a system which kept the country in tutelage, and which raised a monstrous power in the person of the Police Minister, not only over all France, but over his own colleagues. "The Police has become a colossal power," exclaimed Villele, "especially in the interval of the Sessions, with not only every man's liberty at its mercy, but with the journals under its pressure, so as to be a dictator of public opinion. What guarantee was there in the signature of other Ministers? The Police Minister alone knew, or was supposed to know all that passed, and all that menaced throughout the kingdom; and what he declared necessary, who would refuse him? Without freedom of the press, the means of information were confined to the reports of the police." Such arguments, but too just and too liberal, though in the mouths of ultra-Royalists, could only be met by Liberals themselves with the declaration, that they put trust in the purposes and principles of Ministers. The most remarkable speech on the occasion was that of Royer Collard.

"I do not," said he, "attach much importance to the precautions with which the exercise of this power is surrounded. Such precautions are illusory, and ought to be so, if the law were not to be vain. I should prefer not seeing arbitrary power disguised under such legal robing;

for the most sure defence against arbitrary power, when one is obliged to have recourse to it, is to leave it its true physiognomy, and call it by its name. Neither does responsibility offer any guarantee. The best security we have is, that the Ministers who exercise this arbitrary power are not able to assume it, but are obliged to come and ask you for it." In the Chamber of Peers, an amendment was proposed to the effect, that a prisoner who had been detained three months without trial should be *ipso facto* free. The amendment, which did honour to the Upper Chamber, did not pass. Some of the Royalist opponents of the law declared that the Parliament under the ancient régime would not have registered it—as if *lettres de cachet* had need of being registered. Marmont, who in the Chamber of Peers gave signal proofs of senatorial ability as well as liberalism, was the reporter of the law, which of course passed.

Whatever credit may be due to these semi-liberal councillors of the ministry of M. Decazes (councillors they may be called, for Camille Jordan himself accepted the post of Councillor of State) for the improvement in the law of elections, their conduct with regard to the law of individual liberty, if it may escape from blame, certainly merits no praise. It was already unfortunate, even in the discussion of both these laws, that the party which pretended to be the champion of popular rights, should on the contrary confine its arguments to the defence of ministerial power, whilst to the ultra-Royalists was left the defence of local independence, and of freedom of the person, as well as the denunciation of the overgrown and unconstitutional power of the police. But what more than all else placed such men as Camille Jordan, Royer Col-

lard, and De Serre, in a false and untenable position as champions of liberty, was the upholding of the new press law of M. Decazes, especially whilst it was denounced as oppressive and unconstitutional by the ultra-Royalists.

Fouché's ordinance of July, 1814, subjected books, as well as journals, to the censorship. In the following July, books were nominally exempted; but still every printer was bound, previous to publication, to send the sheets of a forthcoming work to the police. The police, if it disliked the work, seized it. The case was then brought before the tribunal; but ere the tribunal could decide, the seasonableness and value, as well as influence, of the work were gone. A remarkable instance had recently occurred in the case of the work of Chateaubriand. The result was, that although three years had elapsed since the first return of the King, and the proclamation of the Charter, no journal had been allowed to spring up, and no writer to become known, save those which preached the very reaction which Ministers now hoped to resist. Every journal which had attempted real constitutional discussion had been suppressed; even the *Censeur* of Comte, though it appeared but in volumes, had not escaped. In such a state of public information, such an extinction of the public journals, M. Decazes ought, for his own sake, to have erected some real liberty of the press; and whether it was the interest of the party or not, men who, like Camille Jordan, professed to be liberal, ought to have insisted on some frank and liberal measure.

Instead of any such, M. Decazes now proposed that no journal should appear without the King's authorization. As to books, they might be seized as before; but the tribunals were obliged to pronounce judgment upon them

within a week. But what tribunal? The judges, three at least in number, of the Tribunal of the Correctional Police! To such a mockery of a law respecting the press did men, who appealed to popular confidence, lend themselves. No doubt they did so for a desire to advance gradually, and not endanger the ministerial existence of Decazes, by precipitating him into liberal measures. But the public judged harshly such dereliction, and the middle classes, which might have put faith in such men as Camille Jordan and Royer Collard, felt their admiration for them weakened, and were prompted to look out for and prefer men courageous enough to embrace the plenitude of liberal and popular principle. Of course, when new elections occurred, such candidates as Benjamin Constant and Lafayette were popular favourites. At such names the semi-Liberals professed to be alarmed, and began to exclaim against the ingratitude of the people; but it was their own fault, in hoping to keep out the reputation and influence of Liberals, whilst they voted for the servitude of the press, and left the cause of its freedom and development to be espoused by even the ultra-Royalists. The fault of the Doctrinaires, if the liberal deputiés of 1817 may be called by that name, is that they placed the public liberties at the mercy of the King and Government, knowing them to have liberal inclinations; and they then incurred the usual punishment of politicians, who leave the public out of sight, and are contented to achieve progress even by stealth and compromise. At a later period, the Doctrinaires fully redeemed these, their early concessions, to M. Decazes; but the making of such at all deprived them of the ground on which they should have stood, and left them merely the attachment of the educated and intelligent class of poli-

ticians, always too few to be considered as the public, or to confer popularity. The union of the liberal Royalists with the ministerial and functionary party of M. Decazes led to the union of the more popular Liberals with the Imperialists, and their opposition embraced disaffection, as Constitutionalism lost itself by an alliance with merely ministerial and personal Liberalism.

The line of argument pursued by Villele was, that the servitude of the press was the servitude of the Chamber.

"The observance of the Charter, the inviolability of property, the preservation of our institutions, as well as all freedom of opinion in the Chamber, depends upon the present question. If the Minister obtains the right of giving or refusing arbitrarily the authorization for journals to appear, he may render it onerous to one, give it gratuitously to another, favour a third, so as to enable it to bear up against opinion, and may thus nullify all our rights. If the law does not specify how journals are to be established and continued, the power will fall to the Minister; and if you thus place at his disposal the power of censuring all the journals in the kingdom, you render the Minister the director of public opinion. He becomes the master of how our very speeches are to be reported and published. You give him the means of attacking you all over the kingdom, without allowing you the means of defence. You place the Deputies of France at the mercy of its ministers. You deliver over to them your reputation and your re-election. You destroy the most important of our institutions, and you shake the very basis of the constitutional edifice."

Perhaps, however, it was too much to expect of French politicians bred in the functionary school, when there

existed no avenue or approach to public life but through the gradations of office—it was too much to expect of them that respect for the freedom of the press, and for the belief that it can always work the cure of its own evils, which is received by Englishmen as a first truth. There had been no experience of a free press in France since the days of Marat and Père Duchesme; and the press was not less sullied than other elements of liberty with the excesses and crimes of the Revolution.

But if experience were wanting in the matter of press-restriction, Ministers alone this time received ample proof of what exceptional tribunals, martial law, and the intrusting of full powers over a people to interested and unprincipled functionaries, might produce. The command of the military in the important city of Lyons, had been intrusted to General Canuel, an officer who had shown himself cruel in La Vendée, who had been checked in his cruelties by General Travot, and who had wreaked vengeance on that unfortunate general, when presiding over the court-martial which condemned him to death. The second in command was General Maringonné. These two officers, with the Mayor of Lyons, M. Fargues, did nothing but dream of plots, imagine conspiracies, and expect every week an insurrection. Some traces of Didier's rising at Grenoble had been discovered at Lyons; and ever since that catastrophe, which had brought showers of advancement and honours on all the generals and magistrates engaged in putting it down, those of Lyons were evidently anxious to get up something of the kind in their own locality. In such a scheme, however, they were seriously obstructed by the Commissioner of Police, Sanneville. He could see nothing in the turbulence of some of the Lyonnese beyond

the disorders inseparable from a state bordering upon starvation. The occupation of the entire country by the allied hosts in 1815, and the spring of 1816, had interrupted the work of agriculture, destroyed houses, implements, horses, bred quarrels, interrupted industry, and consumed its fruits. The following harvest was unproductive, and the year not unlike that which has just passed (1853): from the potato to the vine every crop had failed. By paying one million sterling to the bakers of Paris, the municipality had kept the price of bread as low as a franc and a quarter the four-pound loaf. The price in the provinces may be judged: work was slack at the same time. Bread-riots were therefore frequent; and to the disgrace of some of the provincial authorities, it is recorded that several persons were executed for turbulence inspired by hunger. A woman was guillotined at Montargis for this cause. Government purchased three millions sterling of corn at Odessa, without affording material relief.

The scarcity of food and of work created of course greater facilities of disorder at Lyons; and the military police exerted themselves to provoke conspiracy and *émeute*. At length, in the month of June, when Sanneville, the Police Commissary, was absent, despatches were sent off to Paris that a fearful conspiracy had been discovered. The only fact well proved, seems to have been, that an officer, who tried, and who partially succeeded in persuading two other officers to engage in a conspiracy, was seen by them entering the general's quarters, and that on leaving them he was shot. An insurrection was announced to have taken place in one or two small villages near Lyons, and although no blood was spilt, or

resistance made (ten policemen being the sole force at first directed against the centre of the supposed insurrection), upwards of two hundred persons were thrown into prison at Lyons, and three hundred dragged in thither from the country!

It was, in fact, an enacting of the Grenoble conspiracy, without plot, arms, or insurgents. The Prefect and the Prévôtal Court set immediately to work. Ten insurgents were first shot, and the Government applauded from Paris by the telegraph. Each day there were executions of two or three: on one occasion a boy of sixteen was put to death before the dwelling of his mother! There were one hundred and forty condemnations and twenty-eight sentences of death:—ministers all the time exultant that rebellion had been crushed at Lyons. With a free press or a jury, or even the regular courts of justice, all this would have been impossible. At last, the repeated assurances of the Commissary of Police aroused the suspicions of the Government. He persisted in asserting that there had been no conspiracy, save in the brains of General Canuel and M. Fargues, and that the greater number of the condemned were innocent. The faith of M. Decazes and the Duc de Richelieu in their agents was at length shaken;—it was at the time that the ordonnance of the 5th September was in preparation: and at length Marshal Marmont was selected and empowered to go down to Lyons and inquire. Marmont took down with him his aide-de-camp Colonel Fabvier, who aided him in his researches; but, indeed, the trial of some of the Lyons people who were accused, and which the Duke of Ragusa closely scrutinized, sufficiently revealed that the plot had not been hatched by the unfortunate men exe-

cuted, but by the General, the Prefect, and the Mayor! Marmont's report left the Government no doubts on the subject, and accordingly the Prefect and the General were dismissed, as well as the Mayor, who had joined in the ruthless plot, whilst all the prisoners were set free. Marmont and the Government could do no more, however short of justice fell the acts of retribution. Even the great question of all, the informing the public of the infamous and sanguinary conduct of the authorities of Lyons would not have taken place had not Marmont's aide-de-camp, Fabvier, taken it upon himself to write and publish an account of his researches, and the truth of the entire transaction. Fabvier's doing so rendered him so obnoxious to the future Royalist Government of France, that he quitted the French service altogether, and distinguished himself in Greece. There was a general though suppressed groan throughout France at the disclosure, covered, fortunately for the ministry, by its edict of the 5th of September, which more effectually than aught else put an end, for the time, to reaction. As to Government, it decreed the abolition of the Prévôtal Courts, which formed one of the announcements of the royal speech at the opening of the ensuing Session.

CHAPTER XII.

MERITS OF DECAZES AS A LIBERAL STATESMAN—LIBERALS IN THE CHAMBER—LAW ORGANIZING THE ARMY—VILLELE'S PREFERENCE OF MILITIA TO CONSCRIPTION—OBJECTION TO A MINISTRY OF POLICE—THE PLOT OF THE BORDS DE L'EAU—THE NOTE SECRÈTE.

WHATEVER may be said of the timidity and tardiness of Decazes' liberalism, of the gross misconduct and cruelty of some of his agents, and of his own precipitateness on one or two occasions, it must still be admitted that no statesman who wielded power, or approached it, took a truer view of the necessities of the time. His tendencies were all in the right direction, and if he did not always or at once go so far as would have been desirable and wise for the country, and as the men of the Left Centre wished, it must be remembered that it was only in the summer of 1816 that the young Minister escaped from the irresistible pressure and dictation of the ultra-Royalist majority, a majority which the neglect of Talleyrand and Fouché had allowed to gather and enthrone itself. Nothing could have been more ably conceived and more skilfully conducted than the means by which this majority and Chamber were got rid of, and replaced by one of more moderate opinion. Still it was impossible to modify

Chamber and Cabinet in a day, in the face of an opposition still powerful in the Palace, the high society of the capital, in the functionary class, of which it had got hold, and even in the press, where it had got the start of Liberal writers.

The great difficulty of M. Decazes, as indeed of all politicians who seek to build power on the foundation of a middle party, was, that the party, however superior in intelligence, genius, and sound political views, to the men and the opinion on either side of it, had still not the real, the personal, and enthusiastic support which these had. The Royalists appealed to all the men and all the interests which had lost by the Revolution and were oppressed by the Empire, to the landed proprietors, who retained the traditions of superior birth and position, to the Church, and to all functionaries, who never knew the people as the source of either patronage or power, and who looked to a strong Government for these. The mass of the people, and even of the citizens, required at the same time to be appealed to by larger promises, more enthusiastic sentiment, more vulgar Liberalism, than the *Doctrinaires* could condescend to or understand. A denunciation of ultra-Royalism by Manuel, of subservience to the priesthood by Laffitte, or a mockery of Court and Ministers by Beranger, had much greater power than a ratiocinating discourse from Royer Collard, or a sentimental one in favour of moderate liberty by Camille Jordan. For the present, indeed, that is, in the elections of 1816, the middle party were enabled to advance their best men into the Chamber, the Ministry, and the Council of State; but in subsequent elections it was evident that more popular candidates would be chosen. The middle party

ought to have expected this, and been rejoiced at it; for it could only hold its position by having forces balanced on either side of it. Instead, however, of being convinced of any such necessity, not merely M. de Richelieu, but M. Decazes himself and the King, were shocked at seeing some revolutionary names issue from the electoral urns, as if it were not inevitable and desirable that the sentiments of a great portion of the nation should be expressed and shown in the broad daylight, in order that such sentiment, if pernicious, should be exposed, and if dangerous, refuted and guarded against. This courage and good sense was wanting to the Minister of the intermediate party, and especially to the Duc de Richelieu, who could tolerate the Revolution itself better than he could the man who perpetrated it.

In the recess of 1817, however, the leading members of the Cabinet were firm in the path upon which they had entered, and fully encouraged by success to persevere. In the course of the preceding Session the Ministry of Justice, held provisionally by the Chancellor Dambray, was given to M. Pasquier; the post which he vacated of President of the Chamber of Deputies being filled by M. de Serre. It was impossible to find a better second to M. Decazes than Pasquier; able, adroit, of what were called governmental principles, that is, of the principles which suited the Government of the time, and which, despotic under Napoleon, were prudently constitutional under Louis XVIII.

The events of Lyons had proved not merely the danger of exceptional and military tribunals, but the necessity of organizing the army, and giving it a military spirit, different from that of mere *gens d'armerie*. It was, more-

over, necessary, in order to command the respect of foreign powers, even in peaceful negotiations, for France to have an army; but under the Duke of Feltre it was as impossible to organize an army, as it was to infuse an independent spirit into the multitude of the officers and dignitaries of justice under such a chief as M. Dambray. The War Minister, imposed by the Count D'Artois, was for this reason got rid of, and the post occupied by Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr. Count Molé at the same time took the Marine Department, vacated by M. Dubouchage. In respect of efficiency and talent, and in being an intermediary between extreme parties, this ministry was complete.

Before the meeting of the Chamber elections were to take place of one-fifth of the members of the Chamber, and for the first time by bodies of electors paying 300 francs taxes. It was with a view to this event, and to concert what advantages might be taken of it, that the members of the future liberal party met. It was not easy to do so without infringing the law; but General Lafayette, Benjamin Constant, and General Thiard, all living in the one street, the Rue D'Anjou St. Honore, met at each others' houses. It was too early to form a party to influence the election. It was in fact for the elections to form the first nucleus of a thorough liberal party; and the present elections did so, for when the Chamber met there were five-and-twenty deputies of what was at first called the independent party. In addition to Voyer D'Argenson and Laffitte, the elections of 1817 returned Dupont de l'Eure, Casimir Perier, Bignon, Chauvelin, Caumartin, and Hernoux. Constant and Lafayette had numerous votes for the department of the Seine, but did not get seats till the ensuing year.

The Session was opened by Louis XVIII. on the 5th of November. His Majesty deplored the sufferings occasioned by the failure of crops, and the turbulence which in some districts had been the result of such sufferings. He made no allusion to the events of Lyons, but merely said that the jurisdiction of Prévôtal Courts was about to be put an end to. Negociations with foreign powers for a further diminution of the burdens of military occupation were in progress. The King shadowed forth what would chiefly occupy the attention of the Chambers during the Session, being the Concordat which he had just concluded with the Pope; and the law which would be presented for recruiting and reorganizing the army.

The first parliamentary act of Ministers was to present to the Chambers the new Concordat concluded with the Pope, or rather the old Concordat revived; for in setting aside Napoleon's legislation with regard to the Church and its connexion with Rome, the Duc de Richelieu, or his ambassador at the Papal Court, M. de Blacas, had restored to vigour the old Concordat of Francis I. and Leo X. None of the guarantees, which either the French nation, or the Gallican Church, had a right to require, were to be found in the text of the new convention. The Prime Minister explained this by saying, that though not expressed, they were understood; that the Pope promised to raise no demands with regard to ecclesiastical property sold. The King had the nomination of prelates. No bulls were to be sent to France without receiving the royal sanction. Notwithstanding these fundamental provisions, the antiquated forms and suspicious silence of the Concordat disquieted the growing party of the Liberals, whilst the Royalists were dissatisfied with any law reorganizing the Church

which did not establish its endowment in land, and free its prelates from ministerial influence. That dignitaries of such power and influence, especially when united, should be at the nomination of a foreign potentate like the Pope, was impossible; that they should be named by the King, as Kings were wont to be, an absolutism enlightened by an aristocracy, was tolerable. But that the prelates of the Church, and the expounders of its doctrines, should be named by whatever political party obtained the majority in the Chamber, and become thus constitutionally imposed upon the King, seemed a new kind of simony, more degrading to the Church than any hitherto invented. In the face of this combined dissatisfaction and these conflicting views, it became evident that the Concordat could not pass, and it was therefore no more heard of throughout the Session.

The King in his Royal Charter made several rash promises: one of these was, that the conscription should be abolished. No doubt in the hurried moment of being called to the throne, Louis XVIII. did not enter profoundly into the consideration of what kind of an army he should have; and in the first year of his reign there were a variety of corps raised, of which the soldiers had large privileges, the pay and rank of officers in fact. These ranks it was not difficult to fill up by voluntary enlistment, or rather by patronage extended to such recruits; but here voluntary enlistment stopped. Officers were, indeed, appointed by the Royalist ministers of war, Dupont and Clarke, to all regiments, but soldiers there were none. In his negociations with foreign powers, the Duc de Richelieu soon found the want of an army. He pressed the Allies to withdraw their hosts, and cease

to exhaust the resources of the country; they in reply pointed to the skeleton regiments, the very ranks composed of young officers, but not a bayonet. The Duc de Richelieu demanded of his colleagues an army, and of the King to second the raising and organization of it.

Three or four hundred thousand men was no exorbitant number for the French army to consist of, as soon as the country recovered its real independence, and wished to measure itself with its neighbours, or counterbalance their forces. To keep such a number under arms, in the prime of youth, that is, by taking the best years of each man's life, to dismiss him after having mulcted him of these best years in order to supply his place with a younger—this, were the value actually paid for it, would surpass the means of the wealthiest state: at least, it was more than could prudently be asked of the rich. The entire burden was therefore imposed upon the poor, that is, so many in the hundred of each generation was obliged to serve. The Frenchman, accustomed to such a tax, fortunately for the Government, did not feel the injustice. The proposal to make a levy of the lives and strength of so many of the population was feasible, provided the military service was ordered so as to suit French ideas of equality and ambition. An army may be raised in England on different principles. In France, in 1817, a general of the Empire was employed to draw up and introduce the plan of military organization. Gouvion St. Cyr performed the task with great ability, carried it through every obstacle with great success; and though a soldier, who had passed his life in camps, he found eloquence at the moment it was required to triumph over party objections.

The army, like the church, being a service demanding

too many hands or heads for the lower ranks to be duly paid, demands compensation in the premium which it offers to a few. What is required is a good system of lottery, of which the few dazzling prizes throw into shade and out of view the many blanks. The prizes in the army are commissions for the soldiers, the higher grade for officers. The revolutionary assemblies decreed that one-third of the promotion in the army should depend upon duration of service, one-third upon election, one-third upon the choice of the Government. Election was no longer to be thought of. Two-thirds of the commissions in the army were now to be filled from the military schools, one-third from the non-commissioned officers. The officers to rise by years, not selection.*

A perfect storm burst upon Gouvion St. Cyr from the

* The system of filling even one-third of the corps of officers of an army from the ranks, as is practised by the French, is one of which the value and justice are much disputed. It implies that the duties and position of an officer may be performed and filled by men without superior education or refined habits. The result of this would be, in any great length of time, to lower the grade of officers altogether. It seems desirable that there should be some career open, like the Church formerly, in which the peasant had a good chance of rising to be equal or superior, in some favoured instances, to the aristocratic class. But this large influx of mere peasants, with the habits, ideas, and requirements of peasants, into the Church very much lowered it, and very much incapacitated it from maintaining its struggle with the lettered men which the Reformation raised from the middle class. Justice and fairness point out, that it should be always possible for the poor man to rise to the rank of gentleman, and even higher, by power of mind and character. But this certainly should not be general, and need not be extended to one-third of the number of peasants who enlist. So much for justice. The expediency is a larger question. M. Villemain, in a recent work ("Souvenirs Contemporains"), sneers somewhat at Mr. Macaulay for praising the system of the English army, in which the soldier remains always a soldier, and the officer is born with epaulettes. But he is obliged to add:—

"That what is given in France by absolute equality of right, by securing commissions to soldiers, is not always profitable to liberty. A staff of upstart soldiers, converted into officers, is ready to admit and support a Dictatorship, or a succession of Dictators, more easily than a corps of officers bound by the interests of honour and fortune to the ancient institutions of a country."

Royalist benches, when he made known these conditions of his war-budget. For the last two years the ranks of the army had been filled by officers who had never seen school or service, whilst promotion was to be won by political truckling, or such zeal as had been shown by the commandants at Lyons. The power of promoting officers was declared by some to be a royal prerogative, which the King was not at liberty to part with. It was, however, not to the details of the bill that the Royalists so much objected, as to its whole scope. It went to create a national army not picked and chosen, drilled by Royalist clergy and officered by Vendean squires. With an army such as the multitude of France would make, this army secured in a third of the officers' commissions for the soldier, and each officer not dependent on government, or party, or colour, for promotion, but secure of rising each in its turn: such an army was a genuine democracy, which must for ever remain an obstruction in the way of building up any one of the institutions or privileges of the old régime.

There was no denying a great portion of this to be true; but the country wanted an army, and could not rid its soil of foreign occupation without one. And how was an army to be raised otherwise? None more boldly met this question than M. de Villele. He and his friends, taking their stand upon the solemn promise of the Charter, insisted that the promise should have been kept, and that severest of taxes, which robs the poor youth of his best years, of his trade, and breaks up his life, not resuscitated. The penalty inflicted was indeed distributed by lot, and this was called equality; but was in truth the most gross inequality and injustice, too great for men to be armed with, less obnoxious but not less iniquitous by being transferred to the instru-

mentality of chance? The plan proposed by Villele was a kind of militia, by which a large defensive force would have been raised in each province, peasants no doubt under their landlords, labourers under their employers, for a defensive and sedentary force. Voluntary enlistment could be made to suffice for the active army, which there was no necessity of swelling to large dimensions. It was, in fact, the English system that Villele proposed for France. With great foresight and sound philosophy Villele prophetically pointed out the danger of forming great military institutions, in a country where there were institutions of no other kind. "You have not yet organized the parish or the district, or the department, or even the family, nor yet the Government, nor the judicial power, nor the Church. What is to be the result where the military is the only power that is organized and independent of Government, with its own laws, its own rights, forming a corporation distinct from the rest of the population by the youth at which men enter it, the strict discipline they are subjected to, the different interests they have to look to?" Villele might have added, that should times of anarchy come, the army alone would survive as an institution and a power, and by this alone was certain to predominate over all others. Had Villele drawn this conclusion from the results which he foresaw, it would not have been consistent with his arguments, and probably not with his conviction to add, that the army, however democratically put together, and ruled and promoted, would still be found not the supporter of revolution or democracy, but, on the contrary, of governmental power in whatever hands it was lodged, and both quite able and willing to render that power predominant, where it had the intelligence to make the right use of the soldier.

There was another portion of the project which called forth all the ire of the Royalists. This was the embodying the veterans in provincial regiments under the name of reserve, and thus arming the old soldiers of the Empire, who were still brooding over their fallen fortunes in every province throughout the kingdom. Certainly such a formation of the reserve, and such a garrisoning of the departments, were incompatible with a perseverance in the system of reaction and espionage which had sent so many innocent victims to the guillotine at Lyons, and which had rendered administration and persecution synonymous in the provinces. But veteran soldiers were not men to engage in idle conspiracies. They were men who, if trusted, would reply to that trust by fidelity and gratitude. Gouvion St. Cyr met such objections by asking, whether it was intended that there should continue to exist two armies and two nations, one struck with anathema and unworthy of trust, the other alone endowed with virtue and worthy of favour? May not the soldiers, who have made the glory of the country, be still called to its defence? Shall we still consider them dangerous to its repose? They were admirable in the day of combat, indefatigable in their ardour, heroic in their patience, and never believing that they sacrificed their lives to anything save the honour of France. "Our safety," said St. Cyr, "cannot consist in the denial of such military worth, the oblivion of such glorious services. No empire was ever founded upon mistrust. The King knows this, and insists that there shall be but one army in France, and that the King's, and that there is no national or generous sentiment in the breast of a soldier which he should despair of attaching to the throne." The speech of St.

Cyr carried away the whole Chamber by its enthusiasm, and even the galleries could not refrain from joining in the universal adherence and applause.

In the Chamber of Peers, Chateaubriand reproduced Villele's idea, amplified with his own eloquence. "The War Minister," he said, "had stigmatized a militia as the conscription without equality; and he was right, the conscription is the militia with equality. The conscription is, in fact, the mode of recruiting natural to despotism and to democracy; it partakes of the former by its violation of political and personal liberty, and by the arbitrary rule of exemption; whilst it is democratic in making no account of the individual, and establishes that metaphysical equality which exists neither in property, in education, nor in habits. The despot is as great a leveller as the people. The conscription born under the Republic naturally attained its growth under Bonaparte. The conscription is hostile to the constitutional monarchy in more ways than one. It augments the democratic power of the constitution, and at the same time arms the Crown with a power for oppressing the public liberties. The present law curtails the prerogative of the Crown, and cuts up families in their leading shoots. It does not save eldest sons or only sons from military duty, but transfers their natural privileges to the younger. Monarchy in France has as yet none of its natural elements, save the King. The aristocratic element is but a fiction; and yet you abolish the only mode of recruitment which suits a monarchy, and you vote a democratic army and a democratic law of election. What can you expect is to become one day of your monarchy?"

Notwithstanding all these objections, Gouvion St. Cyr's

law passed both Chambers, and definitively formed the French army upon bases which have been found to be the greatest bulwarks against anarchy, but at the same time rendering the army a much more imperial than a royalist institution. It was but natural, indeed, that in this department of the Government and of administrative policy, Napoleon should have left traces, prejudices, and institutions which survived him, and had become indelible. There was no fundamental law which had a greater effect upon future events than this one discussed in 1817.

At the same time a new law, affecting not the press, (which was still left at the mercy of the Crown,) but volumes and pamphlets, was introduced. Publicity was making immense progress. The new Liberal party was rising into importance, and was planting its literary and political batteries wherever and however it was possible. The daily press being muzzled by the censorship, writers were trying different modes of periodicity, and the more eminent launching forth pamphlets in their own name. The several liberal supporters of the Cabinet were ashamed of the little they had done for the freedom of the press. They had obtained this year the abolition of Prévôtal Courts, and the law respecting the army was a great boon to them, as well as a mortification to the ultra-Royalists. They now brought in a measure regulating the power which the minister exercised of seizing publications. The responsibility was divided between the author, the printer, and the bookseller. Offences of the press were divided into crimes and misdemeanors, the judges of correctional police taking cognizance of the latter, the Court of Assises of the former. The law as preserved was most inefficient, and showed the timidity of M. Decazes. The Liberals

sought to amend it in two points. Previous to publication the printer or author was obliged to deposit a copy with the police. The new law considered this deposit an act of publication, and claimed the right of prosecuting the writer thereon, for anything objectionable in his books. The Liberals urged that the deposit was not a publication, and could only lead to the seizure and suppression of the work. There was, in fact, a censorship with which the Minister was not contented. A more sensible improvement was the appointment of a jury to try all offences of the press.

This proposal of the jury was made by a very moderate man, and a Ministerialist, Count Beugnot, who indeed sought to confine the jury to crimes, not misdemeanors (*délits*) of the press. He did not, however, propose a common jury, but a jury to be chosen from a special list composed of lawyers and magistrates attached to the Royal Court, of men of letters and professions, and of an hundred of the highest tax-payers. M. de Villele, on behalf of the Royalists, supported this idea of a jury to decide upon offences of the press. But instead of admitting lawyers, or professions, or men of letters to this jury, he would compose it exclusively of those capable of being elected members of the Chamber. The Minister of Justice, Pasquier, opposed, in the name of the Government, the proposal of a jury or any jury, which was a tribunal, he said, only meant to decide upon questions of fact, and quite unfit to enter upon the bearings and minutiæ of a question of libel. It was impossible not to remark in the course of this and of the other great debates of the Session what a vast accession of talent was brought by every new election, and how many eminent debaters and orators were

pressing forward and distinguishing themselves. The proposal of the jury was set aside, but the objections urged against considering the deposit as an act of publication were so strong, that the Chamber of Deputies cancelled the article. The debates in the Peers were chiefly remarkable for a striking speech by the Duc de Broglie. "I am firmly persuaded," exclaimed the Duke, "that if France could appear in full daylight such as she really is, —and if this full daylight extinguished at once and put out, as it must, all the small vanities, old and new, all the little despotisms of sub-prefectures and parishes—the attitude of the country would be so simple and so firm, all these questions given birth to by the Revolution would be completely terminated, the impossibility of disturbing any man or thing so fully proved, the wish to be free within and independent without so resolutely pronounced, that fears would change places. Every one would be contented with their position, and the foreigner would be no less satisfied than others."

The Peers, however, reinserted in the law the obnoxious clauses, which considered the deposit as a publication. And thus drawn up, without any one amendment having been introduced, the rejection of the bill altogether seemed preferable to the Liberal members. It was accordingly, with the assistance of their votes added to the Royalists, negatived when put to the general vote in the Upper Chamber.

The Royalist opposition, notwithstanding the talent and the warmth displayed, had little success against Ministers in preaching against them the cause of liberalism or liberty. However specious their arguments, their sincerity was always questionable. And however singular and painful it might be to see men deeply

inspired with the love of freedom, such as Camille Jordan and Royer Collard, take the part of continuing the censorship and with maintaining a Police Minister against the denunciations of Villele and Chateaubriand, still it was evident to all impartial men, that the Constitutionalists were at least sincere, whilst the Royalists invoked liberal principles in their own favour merely to monopolize or betray them. In questions of finance, however, or those of loans, expenditure, and taxation, they retained all the advantages of the talent and perspicuity of such men as Villele. Neither Richelieu nor Decazes were financiers. They had learned the science from the necessities of offices, and of course made considerable blunders. In the ranks of civic opposition there were Laffitte and Casimir Perrier, able representatives of the banking and capitalist interests of Paris, and the natural antagonists of the territorial ideas of Villele. But, unfortunately, the Ministry had taken middle ground between these parties, and was attacked by the talent and power of both. Casimir Perrier pitilessly exposed the ministerial errors in the contraction of loans. The Ministers were more afraid of him than even of Villele. With the vehemence of his character, Perrier accused Ministers of contracting loans with foreigners, when in truth the Parisians could not afford more than the third of the first loan. Perrier, in a pamphlet about this time, sufficiently proves that Ministers had sold or engaged more stock to the foreign contractors of the loan than it had immediate need of funds. The Prime Minister feared the use which might be made of this in debate. M. Decazes recurred at once to the house of Baring which held these inscriptions, and appealed to their generosity. The Barings showed con-

sideration. Although the inscriptions which they had received already bore a handsome premium, they forebore to claim the profit, and returned to the French Prime Minister the amount of *rentes* not required by the necessities of the Treasury. Such men as Perrier found, however, plenty to carp at in the financial arrangements, and unfortunately his complaints carried with them the sympathy of the French capitalists. As monied men in France, at a later date, when railroads first came to be undertaken, feared to engage their money in so new an enterprise, and thus left all the risk and profit to foreigners, the result of which made them envious and unjust; so in the first year of the Restoration, French capitalists wanted alike the courage and confidence to engage even the sums they could command in loans for the liberation of their country from occupation. Foreign houses and capitalists, in consequence, had the opportunity of making large profits out of French necessities and timidity; and envy and ill humour were then, as usual, the results. This was of little consequence to foreigners, but it increased at the time the difficulties of a French Government; and nothing contributed more unfortunately to shake the strength of a Ministry, endeavouring to sustain itself by holding the balance between extreme and contending parties. Difficulties of this kind were summarily removed in the present Session by the Duc de Richelieu coming forward to demand an eventual or contingent credit of the number of millions necessary to free the country from foreign occupation, should the Government be able to come to terms with foreign Ministers on this point.

Another financial question on which the Ministry, in

common with most Cabinets, felt uneasy and weak, was that of economy. The first budget of the Restoration had been fixed at a low rate, but, by degrees, the necessities of administration for every department, (which, with the exception of the War-office, had really much more to do under a constitutional and responsible than under a despotic Government,) caused the expenditure to increase each year far beyond the estimates. The Royalist economists thundered against all, and in their attacks they had with them the sympathy and support of the public. The chief objects of Royalist animadversion were the Council of State and the Police. The liberal advisers of the Ministry, the Doctrinaires, in fact, had taken root and birth in the Council of State. It was there that the Guizots and Jordans, Mouniers and Beugnots, and a host of men, fathomed the science of politics, and learned to take a far more liberal view of them than agreed with ultra-Royalist views and leanings. These, therefore, attacked the Council of State as useless. They attacked the office of superior Police Minister as worse than useless, as pernicious. Such a Ministry, tolerable and necessary under a despotic Government, was an anomaly under a constitutional one. Absorbing all the more regular functions of Home and of Justice Ministers, the Police department spread a network of agents and influence over the country, all foreign to constitutional Government, and obstructing it. Necessitated by frequent conspiracies and revolutions, its agents got up conspiracies and revolutions for its own interests. It demoralized the lower classes by its system of espionage as much as other Ministers do the higher classes by patronages and promises. With secret funds amounting to 50,000*l.*, it was a complete dictatorship, to which it was

necessary to put an end by stopping the supplies. The liberal friends of the Ministry could only take the part of the police and its expenses by representing the necessity to be of a temporary nature. So that M. Decazes, or at least that influential office, was threatened for the future both by friends and foes, however attributions and funds were preserved from a hostile vote for the present.

There was one financial item, if it may be expressed by so trifling a name, which threw the Police Minister's budget, and that, indeed, of all the Ministers, into the shade. This was the demand of the several European nations for debts and damages during past years, which had been set aside, and referred to different commissions in 1815. But France had so gallantly and buoyantly borne her burdens, and her capacities of borrowing seemed to rise so wonderfully with the amount of her debt, that her European claimants, especially the smaller ones, became extravagant in their demands. The ordinary expenditure of the French Government, including the six millions sterling of interest, to which the debt amounted, scarcely exceeded thirty millions sterling, and for this the ordinary revenues sufficed. But there were two-thirds of these raised upon land, which paid frequently one-fifth of its net produce to the State.* The excise, so heavy on drinks and salt, did not produce four millions, the customs little more than three. It was difficult to increase this taxation. Twelve millions a-year were, therefore, raised in loans, of which one-half went to pay the annual instalments of the war contribution, as indemnity to foreign Governments, less than one-half went to the armies of occupation. And with all these were the French domestic arrears of debt to meet.

* Memoir of the Duc de Gaete.

In addition were the demands for debts and damages, of which seven millions sterling and upwards had been paid to the most pressing, but of which there were further demands to the amount of 1,390,000,000 of francs. Some of the small German princes demanded arrears due for military services since the reign of Henry IV. It was computed at nearly a year's revenue of France. The expenses of the armies of occupation would be, if prolonged to five years, another year's revenue; and these claims for damages swelled to two years' revenue. The Duc de Richelieu declared that payment was impossible.

As was usual with the French Minister, in his moment of distress, he recurred to the two Powers, and to their two chief men, who had never indeed shown a wish but to be indulgent, and not only to treat France in a friendly spirit, but to see that other Powers did not make use of present advantages to be inimical or extortionate. The Duc de Richelieu appealed to Alexander and to the Duke of Wellington. The Emperor Alexander also wrote to the Duke of Wellington, expressing the desire that as he had been charged by all the Courts of Europe with the command of their armies in France, so they would intrust to him the arbitration or decision upon their pecuniary claims. No higher tribute could be paid to the justice and magnanimity of the English commander. The Duke came to Paris in consequence, and gave himself up for several months to preside over a Commission, to decide upon the amount at which this host of claims should be liquidated. It was during the period of his stay for this purpose that an assassin thought he was doing good service to his country by an attempt to assassinate the Duke. The shot, fired at his Grace, as his carriage passed into his hotel, failed of its

aim. The French Prime Minister offered 200 millions of francs in payment of 1400 millions of demand. At last, the sum was fixed at 300 millions, or 16 millions of 5 per cent *rentes*, of which England received three, Prussia more than two and a half, the other Powers in less proportion.

Instead of negotiating these, and the subsequent loans raised towards the close of the year, at the onerous price of 55 francs for an inscription of five annually, the French Minister of Finance was able to negotiate them at the advanced price of 67; and the demands of persons anxious to take portions of the loans were so numerous and eager, that no scenes of the kind had occurred in Paris since the day of Law. So eager were the French to share in the profits of lending to the Government, that the French five per cent. Stock, which was at 65 in January, attained the price of 80 in the month of August, to sink towards the close of the year, it may be added, to the same price which had marked its commencement. Still, it was evident that France could establish a large and successful system of public credit, capable of carrying the country through any difficulty, and which, could it have been made to spring up under the hand of Napoleon, would have kept his strength, and rendered his overthrow, or that of his empire, a far more colossal enterprise.

The reduction of the extravagant claims of the different European Powers for past debts and damages, and their immediate liquidation, was but a preliminary with the Duc de Richelieu to the more important object of the withdrawal of the armies of occupation. It had been expressly inserted in the original treaty, that the occupation might cease in three years, in lieu of being extended to

five. The alternative was to depend upon the state of France after the lapse of the shorter period, and the prospect which it then held out of permanent quiet and solid establishment. From policy, as well as generosity, the Emperor Alexander was anxious to liberate France from her present burdens and humiliation. It entered into his views to treat France as an ally, its Court and Government as a support, which could never be till France was independent. The English Government sympathised with such feelings. The military party in Prussia, more than the King himself, was alone anxious to prolong what it considered but a just punishment upon France. The Sovereigns and the Ministers met in the autumn of the year at Aix-la-Chapelle to take this subject into their consideration, and to decide whether they should accept the guarantees of peace, under the observance of treaties that Louis XVIII. himself could give, or whether they should prolong the military occupation in mistrust.

There was a party in France deeply chagrined, that the glory of putting an end to the military occupation should accrue to Richelieu and Decazes. The ultra-Royalists were so constantly in the habit of repeating to one another and to the world, that the dissolution of the old Chamber, the change of the electoral law, and the reconstruction of a national army, had flung back the country into the old paths of revolution, and would infallibly lead to democracy and to anarchy, that the more fanatic believed the assertion, whilst the more wily accredited it. Its peril formed the never-failing topic of the public places of resort, which the ultra-Royalists frequented. The Café Valois, in the Palais Royal, and the Terrace of the Tuileries on the water-side, were chosen haunts of the

men of these exaggerated opinions. And here it seems were broached and interchanged the feasibility and necessity of a movement or a conspiracy for restoring that political influence which had prevailed in 1815. True or false, or probably neither altogether the one nor quite the other, the secret aims of a conspiracy were revealed to M. Decazes in the month of June. The scheme was to seize the Ministers by the Royalist troops of the guard, carry them to Vincennes, compel Louis XVIII. to resign in favour of his brother, restore the double system of election, and summon a new Chamber. M. Decazes, washing his hands of a plot, which so marvellously seconded his designs by its folly, referred the revealer of the plot to the Home Minister. And M. Lainé forthwith issued warrants to arrest a certain number of Royalists of mark, and with them the generals, whose zeal had so distinguished them at Grenoble and at Lyons, Canuel and Donnadieu, but who had been released from active duties by the present Government. General Canuel had the maladresse to fly and secrete himself. Such was the conspiracy, and such the conspiration of what was called the *Bords de l'Eau* plot, which led to no more than a few months' imprisonment of those inculpated. When, at the same time, the law-officers of the Government were prosecuting M. Fievée, the ex-editor of the *Débats*, for one of his Royalist publications, and when they obtained a sentence of imprisonment against him, it may be seen how flagrant was the quarrel between M. Decazes and his friends on one side, and the Count d'Artois and his champions on the other.

The conspiracy of the *Bords de l'Eau* was not the most foolish or unpatriotic act of the mad party of the ultra-

Royalists. One of the secret councillors, most active and indeed most clever agent of the Count d'Artois, drew up by his desire at the time a paper, which, as it was afterwards secretly addressed to the several sovereigns of Europe or their representatives, became known as the *Note Secrète.** In this note, M. de Vitrolles embodied all the complaints of the ultra-Royalists against the Government of M. Decazes and of the King, and discussed the

* This famous note was, the greater part of it, revealed in the columns of the "Times." Capefygue has given the following summary of its contents:—

The Revolution has got possession of all, even to the lowest classes of the nation, which it excites with violence; principles destructive of our monarchy are professed in Parliament by the King's Ministers—witness the War Minister's speech on the law of recruitment, or that of the Peace Minister on the liberty of the press; audacious writings sap the foundation of social order; and repressive laws are applied solely to those writers who defend monarchy and legitimacy. By what means is France, and consequently Europe, to be saved from the revolutionists? Must military occupation be continued, or armies kept in watch beyond our frontiers? In the latter case action upon the centre of France will not be rapid enough; and occupation, converted into a blockade, will be the more irritating. It is to be feared that the more foreign armies are withdrawn, the greater will be the irritation and resistance. Five combinations present themselves to different minds:—1. The partition of France. 2. The change of dynasty. 3. The destruction of the representative system. 4. The enlightenment of the King as to the principles which should consolidate the monarchy. 5. The change of Ministers. The first is revolting to the mind, and not to be thought of. To place a new dynasty on the throne would be the subversion of the principles of legitimacy. The Revolution, it is said, would agree better with a revolutionary King. But in truth the Revolution would agree with no King. It can only destroy, it cannot establish or preserve anything. If it could, there would be some signs to show. One of the other remedies is to garrison France with a hundred thousand foreign soldiers. But what violence would be necessary, in order to wring from France the concessions which it has obtained from the King? They have been consecrated by the Powers themselves by the exercise of those rights; by the guarantees found in them, and their adoption by the powers who were first opposed to them. Any attempt, therefore, to destroy the present system would be dangerous. But the King and his Ministers may be brought back to the principles on which monarchy may be established; not the present Ministers, who are shortsighted, and have not the strength of mind necessary to repair their early faults. A complete change of Ministry, therefore, offers the only salutary, as well as the loyal means, for preventing France from becoming a focus of revolutions to set Europe in a flame.

different modes of remedy, of which the least violent was a change of ministers and of policy, to be forced upon the King. As there was no hope of these being done by public opinion or by Parliament, the *Secret Note* represented the necessity of Foreign Powers undertaking this task. For this purpose they were to refuse to withdraw the army of occupation, and to make use of the hold which it gave them over Louis XVIII. to compel him to a change of system. It is a full measure of the political sagacity of the future Charles X., of his independence as a Frenchman, and of his comprehension of constitutional principles and duties, that he approved of the tenor of this Note, which he caused to be addressed to the Sovereigns, especially to those about to meet at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Such political views and assertions as those contained in the *Note* were not likely to make any serious impression upon the Emperor Alexander, at least as yet. Lord Stanhope made himself the echo of them in the British House of Lords, which implied, how far they were from being considered serious by Lord Castlereagh or Wellington. The Prussian and the English Governments put faith in the solidity of the French Monarchy, as administered by the Duc de Richelieu and M. Decazes. And the former found few, if any, difficulties at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the way of the continuance of a treaty, for the withdrawal in that year of the armies of occupation. The only knotty point was the payment of the sums due; and the French Ministers had been furnished by the Chamber with every facility and power in this respect. A sum of 265 millions of francs still remained to be paid for the expense of the army of occupation. When this

demand was satisfied, the French calculated that during these first years of the Restoration they had transferred to the hands of foreigners the sum of two milliards of francs, or eighty millions sterling—no very mighty sum to have paid as the penalty of a long war, in which France had succumbed, whilst one of her victors, England, had added six times that amount to her debt in the course of the arduous struggle.

Although commerce and consumption and the great development of wealth and material life, the result of giving full freedom to the energies of the industrious classes, had not yet become developed in France, as is evident from the yet low figure of imports and exports and customs produce, there were abundant reasons in the social economy which succeeded the events of 1814 and 1815, as well as in the failure of almost every kind of crop, to account for this tardiness. It was necessary for an immense proportion of the inhabitants of France to change their pursuits and habits. Capital, in whatever way employed in France, had ceased to be productive. Loans for the payment of foreigners then began to absorb the capital that might have found its way into the channels of trade or of industrial enterprise, and the historian has thus as yet no encouraging account to give of the progress of national prosperity in the first years of Constitutional Government.

The national mind, however, was aroused and excited to the throwing forth of a great many men of eminent talent in almost every walk of science and of letters. But what is here already of importance to remark is, the great change in the public mind of France, which, from worshipping heroes, and having its interest concentrated on fields of battle, came to entertain the most

unbounded enthusiasm for political facts, publicists, and orators and statesmen.

We have endeavoured in a former chapter to account for the fact of an ultra-Royalist and retrograde Chamber of Deputies having been elected in 1815. A cause of this, more influential than any peculiarities of the electoral law, was, that there were no men of public character or eminence, liberal or illiberal. There was no bar, no journalism, no oratory. Except in the career of arms, Napoleon's Government had left the eminence and talent of the country a blank. The intellectual firmament was without stars. If Talleyrand exercised such marvellous influence in 1814 and 1815, it was owing to his being almost the only Frenchman who could be called a politician. The Restoration, during its first years, had certainly not thrown open a wider door for orators or publicists. Still even its first Assemblies showed eloquence. The press remained fettered, but able men in the shape of pamphlet writers, such as Constant and Chateaubriand, contrived to speak out; and after the discussion of the law for seizing the works of authors and proscribing them, in the Session of 1817, which showed the freedom of the press to be dawning, periodicals at least, if not the journals, then began to appear and to assume important rank in the political world. The year 1818 is the date of the establishment of the *Minerve* and the *Conservateur*, the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*, the Liberal and Conservative organs of French periodical literature. It was later that the daily journals recovered some liberty and importance.

M. Decazes may boast the honour of first opening, though certainly not wide, the folding-doors of fame to French political talent. The Minister did so, indeed, as

was but natural after the fearful past, in fear and trembling; and some of the liberty which he then allowed with one hand he had to repress with the other. Hence the numerous prosecutions of Fievée and other writers in 1818. But the prosecutions of the press did but add to the fame and power of the writer, whilst they associated with him his equally important and rising brother of the bar. It was in defending the press, indeed, that the lawyers of this epoch chiefly rose to eminence and to notoriety. They made public men of Manuel, Merilhou, and a host of others, who by their forensic display presented themselves as powerful and attractive candidates for the Chamber; and an election to the amount of one-fifth was then annual. Each year offered a chance to the rising barrister or pamphleteer, which was generally seized. The result was only the natural effect of the display of political talent. But it alarmed the Court, which saw in the rise of lawyers and men of letters the first waves of a new revolutionary tide.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DUKE OF RICHELIEU LEANS TO THE ROYALISTS, AND IS OBLIGED TO RESIGN—DECAZES FORMS A MINISTRY—OPPOSITION IN PEERS QUASHED BY A LARGE CREATION—NEW LAW OF THE PRESS—DECLINE OF THE MIDDLE PARTY, AND CAUSE OF IT.

THERE was one feature in the Great Revolution, which left an indelible impression upon all who observed and remembered it. This was its downward and continued progress to the extreme of democracy, and of every democratic excess, without halt or hesitation, without a resting-point, without alternation or suspense, much less reaction. The safety and security of Constitutional Government lie in its oscillation, in the invariable rule that a political current which has set in for a series of years in one direction, will ebb in time to run in one completely the reverse. Parties, therefore, be they of resistance or of progress, never despair. Conservative or Liberal know each that his time must come, and that all that is to be done is to bide events, rather than force them; be best prepared for the opportunity when it occurs, and then make the most of it. This is the true philosophy of Constitutional Governments, which begets patience, obedience to the law, and that trust in the regular working of the system, which precludes in the

heart of prince or people the idea of either *coup-d'état* or conspiracy, and which characterizes any scheme approaching to either as equally absurd and insane.

Unfortunately both this belief and the grounds for it are wanting in France. The people do not put trust in the Constitution to save their liberties, nor has the Prince learned to place his security in it. The political creed which the Royalists had derived from the events of the Revolution was, that the first fatal concessions dragged the whole revolutionary consequence after it. The French revolutionists who were much of the same opinion, if we may judge from an expression of Barrére, preserved by Véron: "La contrevolution à commencée le 9 Thermidor." The States-General were assembled at Versailles, and allowed to form an assembly: events followed, enchained the one to the other, and resistance was vain. The constitutional monarchists, and even the moderate Republicans, had become too powerless either to save the monarchy or to suspend the downward course of revolution. There was no force of resistance, after the bounds of ultra-Royalism were passed. It was not merely the Count d'Artois and his friends, who were imbued with these opinions, but the King himself and his Ministers, both the Duc de Richelieu and M. Decazes, were fearful lest they might be getting upon that inclined plane, down which French government seemed ever destined to descend into depths of liberalism, in which neither order nor monarchy could exist. As yet, however, that is in 1818, M. Decazes and the King both felt secure that a Chamber of Representatives chosen by electors paying 300 francs direct taxes, themselves not eligible unless they paid 1000 francs, could not be very democratic in spirit or in tendency;

and whilst ultra-Royalist opposition showed its absurdity and want of judgment, in such conspiracies as that styled the *Bords de l'Eau*, as well as its unpatriotic malevolence in the *Secret Note* to the Great Powers, the King and his Ministers found themselves the object of considerable popularity. Expressions of gratitude poured in upon them for the ordonnance of the 5th of September, and its results; and the King flattered himself that he enjoyed the gratification of popularity without humbling or endangering the throne. M. Decazes was the happy instrument of this policy. So the aged King regarded him, as the Minister conducted himself more as the disciple, as the younger friend, than as the responsible Minister, or the independent statesman. Louis always addressed M. Decazes as *mon enfant*, the same term which he applied to the Royal Duke, his nephew; and the monarch had shown a paternal solicitude for his Minister, so far as to ask for him in marriage the daughter of the Count St. Aulaire, one of the old noblesse. Though of a highly-ancient and respectable bourgeois family in Libourne, M. Decazes was looked down upon by squires and viscounts, who had no greater hereditary wealth and no more illustrious genealogy. The first wife of the Count had been a Princess of Nassau Saarbruck, and being the only child of this marriage, the daughter of Count St. Aulaire inherited princely fortune as well as distinction. This splendid marriage Louis by his royal solicitation procured for M. Decazes, who, handsome in person and engaging in address, as well as possessed of some of the first talents of the statesman, was certainly one of the best specimens of royal favouritism that history has to show. Bred to the bar, M. Decazes had been taken notice of by Lucien and by Louis Bonaparte, and by one

of them he had been placed as secretary, or in some similar capacity with Madame Bonaparte. Napoleon took a sovereign dislike to the handsome youth, who returned it, and who at Bordeaux during the Hundred Days did not fear to show it. Some one pleaded that the rapidity of Napoleon's triumphal return, was the best proof of his popularity and his legitimacy. Decazes observed, he did not know that sovereignty was the fit prize of superior speed—*la prix de la course.* Such words are repeated with alacrity; and Decazes, on the second restoration appointed Prefet of Police, secured himself in the post by adroitly closing the hall of the Chamber of Representatives, and thus virtually dissolving them.

Towards the end of September appeared the ordonnance convoking the one-fifth of the electoral colleges, whose turn it was this year to choose the deputies anew. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, who had come to Aix-la-Chapelle to take part in the councils and decision of Congress, made a hurried visit to Paris at this time. The elections of the department of the Seine were then in progress. M. Goupil, one of the sitting deputies having died, Benjamin Constant disputed the election with Ternaux, the great manufacturer, so that liberal ideas were predominant, even in the capital, amongst the class of highly-taxed electors. This fact Louis XVIII. assures us did not at the time alarm Alexander, or lead him to share the horror and concern which filled the breasts of the ultra-Royalists. Some other of the elections were highly significant. Lyons, the great manufacturing capital, which had formerly elected M. de Fargues, a name so notorious in the getting up of the spurious insurrection, now set this man aside, and chose Camille Jordan, the most eminent liberal

orator of the day, in his place. Manuel was chosen for La Vendée, Lafayette for Le Mans, St. Aulaire for Nismes; Girod de l'Ain and a number of Ministerialists destined to future celebrity, were for the first time returned. The most remarkable feature of the elections was, however, the struggle between the Ministerialists and the semi-Liberals on the one side, the thorough Liberals on the other; between the Left Centre of the Chamber and the Left. M. Decazes supported Ternaux for Paris; the '*Minerve*,' and other ultra-liberal prints, supported Constant. However really a moderate man, the Court abhorred Benjamin Constant as the councillor of Napoleon during the Hundred Days, and Government exerted itself to promote the return of Ternaux in opposition to him. At first Constant had the advantage, he having in the ballot 3431 votes against 3255 for Ternaux. The ultra-Royalists had abstained in dislike of both; but Ternaux having been induced to utter some expression of adherence to the principle of legitimacy, the Royalists threw their votes into the scale for Ternaux and secured his election. There had been at first 950 Royalist votes for a candidate of the name of Bonnet, which showed that in the capital the Royalist party could not command above one-fourth of the votes; a sufficient answer to the theories of Chateaubriand, that Royalists of his way of thinking formed the great majority in France.

It should have been mentioned, that a short time previous to the election, Ministers, in the absence of M. de Richelieu at Aix-la-Chapelle, had taken the necessary but bold step of depriving the Count d'Artois of his command over the National Guards throughout France. The institution of the National Guard was indeed under the Restoration, as under the Empire, an *ad libitum* kind of

service, very much in the power of the authorities of each locality to compose or order as they pleased. The enrolment, the call to service, and the choice of officers, were in the hands of the Prefects, and as they had been organized in 1815, the National Guards were, of course, Royalists, and remained so. It was not till after the ordonnance convoking the Chamber had been issued, that M. Decazes felt the importance of neutralizing the power of the National Guard in the provinces, and the ultra-Royalist chief in the capital. He, therefore, proposed to the King to suppress that central administration of all the National Guards of the kingdom, that M. de Vaublanc had established for the convenience of the Count d'Artois. The King objected, under the plea of keeping peace in the Royal Family; but the demand of his Minister was too just, and the necessary ordonnance was signed and issued.

But whilst M. Decazes and the King were thus pushing in one direction, the Duc de Richelieu was impelled in another by the foreign advisers with whom he spent so many weeks at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. When the Emperor Alexander visited Paris, the elections had not taken place. The result of these elections created a powerful sensation amongst the Royalists, who communicated their fears in some more imposing shape than the former *Note Secrète*. It had been for some time the Duke of Wellington's opinion, expressed to Louis XVIII., that the King should draw closer to the Royalists, by which the Duke meant that he should take a French Tory Ministry; and this evidently became, after the election, the feeling of the Sovereigns and statesmen at Aix-la-Chapelle. Russian and English statesmen held different opinions two years back, when they approved the ordonnance dissolving the

Chamber, and shaking off the ascendancy of the ultra-Royalists, but since then, the French liberal and independent party, as it was allowed, had grown more bold in conduct and more violent in speech. In the weakness of parliamentary opposition, they were not nice either in the choice of arguments or allies; and amidst all that they abetted of constitutional principles and liberal rights, they were nevertheless ardent panegyrists of Napoleon, and they adopted all the griefs and too many of the prejudices of the imperial party. Forgetting, or overlooking the resistance that Louis XVIII. had made, and was making against ultra-Royalism and Absolutism, the opposition of the Left directed not the less their batteries against the Bourbon family, and identified it with the humiliation and enslavement of France, whilst the glory of the country, and we might also conclude from the argument, its freedom also, had been founded and secured by Napoleon. If Louis XVIII. had the magnanimity to despise such calumnies, and look down upon such opposition, foreigners ought to have done so; but these, more susceptible and more ignorant, dreaded the Bonapartist leaning and the military spirit of the French opposition, and thus persuaded all to echo the Duke of Wellington's advice of "Lean to the Royalists."

The unanimity of these counsels made a complete convert of the Duc de Richelieu, and the Prime Minister expressed this so frankly in his letter from Aix-la-Chapelle, that M. Decazes foresaw his danger, and his probable difference with the Duke. M. Decazes and his political existence were identified with the ordonnance of the 5th of September. The sacrifice of that ordonnance, and of the Law of the Elections to the ultra-Royalists, M. Decazes

knew to be the sacrifice of himself, for to his influence they attributed the revolution in politics which was effected in 1816, and for him he felt there could be no pardon.

The Duc de Richelieu, on his return from Aix, at the close of November, came fully impressed with the necessity of winning the support of the Royalists. Instead, however, of frankly stating his opinion of this necessity at once to his Cabinet, in order that the Ministry might act conjointly upon it, M. de Richelieu, in his ignorance of constitutional forms, and with a desire no doubt to keep the Cabinet together, entered into negotiation with the Royalist chiefs, the more violent of whom demanded the dismissal of Decazes, and a change in the electoral law. M. Villele professed himself contented with the latter condition. In this state of things, M. Decazes, who suspected, though he was not informed, that the Royalists advanced the demand for his dismissal, thought it more dignified to resign; and he formally proposed to the Cabinet that he should do so. He did not, however, put forward the demand of the Royalists as a cause, or as a menace before which he thought it prudent to yield; but his office as Police Minister was itself the target at which not only Royalists, but Liberals shot, and to which, even some of the Doctrinaires objected, defending it on the last occasion as a temporary evil. With the increase of liberty or independence in the Chamber, the Ministry of Police and its expenses became a difficulty, and formed the weak point of the Budget. His own resignation would most decorously put an end to the office and the difficulty. M. de Richelieu was too generous to admit of this self-sacrifice; but he thought the suppression of the Police Ministry a desirable mode of propitiating the Royalists. He therefore proposed that M.

Lainé should cede the Home Department to M. Decazes, and take the Justice Department in its stead; M. Pasquier being recompensed by the Ministry of the King's Household. M. Pasquier consented without any hesitation to the arrangement; but M. Lainé declined to be thus treated as a moveable, and offered his resignation in reply to the proposal. As M. de Richelieu would not retain office without M. Lainé, this arrangement was abandoned.

Amidst all these differences, resignations, and resumptions, the only member of the Cabinet immediately displaced was the one who was, in truth, of no party, and attended only to the specialties of his office; this was Count Corvetto, Minister of Finance. The eagerness of the French or Parisian public to partake, or, indeed, to monopolize the profits of loans (proved to be so lucrative to foreign bankers) has been described. Count Corvetto thought it prudent and patriotic to satisfy their ardour, and consequently thirteen or fourteen millions of new *rentes* were subscribed for in Paris; and so eager was the public, that the Stock rose to 80. But the French subscribers had not capital equal to their boldness or their greed; and their eagerness to sell and to borrow was soon equal to their previous eagerness to buy. The Bank had discounted largely on the credit of the Inscriptions. The Finance Minister himself thought it prudent to take advantage of the moment of prosperity to utilize what was remaining idle in the Treasury. Still hopes were entertained that the final treaty at Aix-la-Chapelle would give a higher value to securities. The result was, on the contrary, to create a new and vast amount of Stock, which some of the governments, and especially the Russian, had no sooner received, than orders were given to sell and

convert them into money. The wise reserve, recommended by Ouvrard, only to issue the Stock to such a house as that of Baring, which would take care not to depreciate the value of what they held, was neglected; indeed, the claims of the Parisian bankers, of Laffitte and Perier, rendered it impossible, and the consequence was, the inundation of the market with this recently-created Stock, and a depreciation of nearly 20 per cent. in a few weeks, which spread ruin and dismay amidst a public unaccustomed to such speculations, and unprepared for such losses. Of course the Finance Minister bore alone the blame; the crowd of speculators demanded his place, if not his head; and Count Corvetto, ill from mortification and failure, was anxious to escape from the obloquy. He resigned, and his place was filled by M. Roy.

A day or two after, on the 10th of December, the ceremony of opening the Chamber took place. The successful negotiations for the evacuation of the national territories by foreign armies formed a fine subject for royal congratulation. The King informed the Deputies that his son, the Duc d'Angoulême, had himself raised the French flag on the walls of Thionville. The pecuniary efforts and sacrifices which the nation had made to liberate itself were declared to be unique in history. There was, as usual, one paragraph devoted to liberal progress, and another to conservative repression. A good harvest allowed the King to rejoice in the return of plenty.

Strange to say, the Cabinet Council in which it was to be decided what was the future policy and tendency of Ministers, was not held till two days after the King's speech, at the very time when the election of President of the Chamber was about to take place, and when the choice

would necessarily bespeak the leaning of the Ministers and the intentions of the King.

The fact was, that the negotiations with the Royalists were not advanced enough to be made known fully either to M. Decazes or to the King. Consequently, when the Cabinet met on the 12th, those in the secret of that negotiation could say little. M. de Richelieu merely pleaded the necessity of conciliating the Royalists, and sacrificing to them the Law of Election. M. Lainé and M. Molé adhered to this opinion. Messrs. Pasquier and Roy had nothing to say. Messrs. Decazes and Gouvion St. Cyr were for continuing the policy followed hitherto, and consequently for not sacrificing the Electoral Law. Another meeting of Ministers on the 14th led to no clearer result, and it was now proposed to discuss the matter in the presence of the King; but his Majesty began to feel an incipient attack of the gout, and thus the ministerial resolution was postponed, whilst the acts of the Chamber could not be averted. The Deputies had to name their President on the 16th. The votes showed the distracted state of the Chamber, as well as of the Government. M. de Serre, who was of the opinion of Decazes, and supported the electoral law as it stood, had 94 votes, whilst M. Ravez, who was in the Duc de Richelieu's opinion and secret, obtained 97. Although the opinion of the King inclined him to nominate De Serre, it being the royal prerogative to choose between the two first candidates, still as Ravez had the majority, the King mentioned casually, but not definitively, to M. de Richelieu, that he thought Ravez must be named. Instead of waiting for so important a point to be discussed in council, the Duc de Richelieu informed Ravez; and the Duke was so pleased with the

advantage thus afforded to his opinion, that he called in Decazes, and then both statesmen thought that there was such a full agreement between them, that they embraced. M. Decazes in fact hesitated, and yielded so far to the ascendancy of his colleagues that he accepted Ravez's appointment, and agreed not to discuss the question fully in the council of the following day, at which his Majesty was to preside. This desire it was found impossible to fulfil. There was nothing of which Louis XVIII. was so jealous as of his authority. The idea of determining so great a question of government as whether Ministers should conciliate the Royalists by sacrificing the Law of Election, without consulting Royalty, was a slur upon his dignity, and was certainly a bold and insincere act on the part of a French Minister.

The Duc de Richelieu himself and M. Molé had both gone very far in the negotiations with the Royalists of the Chamber of Peers. They had even favoured the formation of a committee of Ministerialists to come to terms with the Royalists. The King learned the fact by chance from M. de Brezé. He was very indignant, not suspecting the Duc de Richelieu of lending himself, without consulting the King, to such negotiations. It soon appeared, however, that the Secretaries named by the Chamber of Peers were of this *fusion*, it might be called; and, still more important, that the members of the Commission of the Address in the Peers were downright ultra-Royalists.

The King was aware of the Duc de Richelieu's connivance, and his Majesty has recounted what followed in a valuable memoir written by him.*

"The Cabinet Council met on the 17th. The Keeper

* See Appendix, end of volume.

of the Seals spoke first, as he had done at the Duc de Richelieu's, very eloquently, but concluding nothing. Marshal Gouvion gave his opinion that there should be no change, not even a modification of the Law of Election. M. Molé declared he did not think it possible to remain in the line hitherto followed: he thought Government should lean to the Royalists, not concealing that this would be to undergo the yoke of a master, but arguing that of two evils it was the least. M. Lainé thought that the ministerial banner should be fixed, but that Government should stretch their hands to the right and left. M. Roy seconded this idea. M. Decazes dwelt on the danger of changing, which meant destroying the Law of Election, that was extremely popular, and recommended remaining in the actual line. M. de Richelieu spake last, inclining, as it was easy to perceive, to the opinion of M. Molé, but like Messrs. Pasquier and Roy, he came to no conclusion. At last I spoke, and seizing the idea of M. Lainé, I said, 'Let us plant our flag upon the ordonnance of the 5th of September, 1815, and continue to follow the line in which we have been all united till now. Stretch out the hand right and left, saying with Cæsar, *He that is not against me is with me.*' Thus terminated the Council, and I had the simplicity to think that all differences would cease in the Cabinet. It will soon be seen how I was deceived."

The Duc de Richelieu had in fact, that virtue of a diplomatist, silence, which is often the vice of the politician. He should have spoken out. Well pleased, when his opinion prevailed, as in the election of President, he was not contented when those of M. Decazes triumphed, as they certainly seemed to do in the discussion of the Cabinet Council, summed up by the King. M. Decazes proceeded

in the spirit of the King's final decision. He gave the word to the Ministeralists in the Chamber of Deputies, and the result was the election of Vice-President and Secretaries, who far from being of the opinion or colour of M. Ravez, were completely Doctrinaires. One was M. de Saint Aulaire, father-in-law of M. Decazes.

Those of the Ministers, who had gone so far as to come to an agreement with the Royalists to change the electoral law, took the opportunity to speak out. M. Molé denounced the conduct of M. Decazes as unfair. M. Lainé agreed with him, as did the Duc de Richelieu: all three, with M. Pasquier, sent in letters of resignation to the King, an example which was speedily followed by M. Decazes himself. These resignations were written on the 21st.

The first act of the King on receiving them was, to request that the Duc de Richelieu should come to him. His Majesty complained to the Duke of the embarrassment into which he was thrown, and the necessity in which he was placed of recurring to M. de Talleyrand, to whose Anglican and anti-Russian leanings M. de Richelieu was averse. The ex-Minister required a day to consider, and having consulted with his friends, returned a written answer on the 23rd, insisting not only that M. Decazes should be excluded from the new Cabinet, but that he should be sent to either Naples or St. Petersburgh, and should take his departure within a week.*

The proposal must have been extremely mortifying to the King, whom it plainly accused of weakness towards a personal favourite, whose ascendancy could only be combated by his exile. Such a demand recalled all the hardships of the Imperial Government, and indeed of those

* See Appendix, for M. de Richelieu's letter.

barbarous habits, which require the death or exile of any man which has been in power. At the same time that he received this letter, the monarch also was presented with the addresses from the Chambers. That from the Peers, concocted by those very men with whom the Duc de Richelieu had in a manner plotted, recommended, that "acquired rights, as well as the repose of Europe, should be put under the safeguard of morals and religion." This ambiguous language implied that the liberal party, to which M. Decazes leaned, were enemies of religion and morality, and were moreover Bonapartists, opposed to the Throne, to its rights acquired with the Restoration, and also to the peace of Europe. The Chamber of Peers would never have addressed such furious and ultra-Royalist language to the King, if his own Ministers had not encouraged them.

Louis was indignant. But he saw in M. de Richelieu the chosen Minister of the Allied Powers, whilst he doubted the strength of Decazes against both the Royalists and the friends of Richelieu. He therefore resigned himself, like a wise constitutional monarch, to necessity. He called Decazes to an interview, and shocked him greatly by the severity of the condition, and the exile imposed upon him. His young wife, whom the King's kindness had procured him, was in a condition too delicate to travel. The King and his Minister shed together tears of friendship and distress. They were not yet destined to part.

The financial year at that time closed on the 31st of December. No Budget had been presented, or was ready to be presented. A vote of credit was necessary, and M. Roy came forward to demand this in the shape of six-twelfths for six months. The proposal met no encouraging reception. Count Beugnot complained, that there were

no accounts. Other members made objections: in fact it was whispered, that a Royalist Cabinet was in process of formation, and that its first act would be to dissolve the Chambers, in order to change the electoral law. Villele came to the aid of Roy in one of these debates, with the plea so singular in an opposition mouth, that the King's free choice of men and acts should not be fettered. The Chamber was already hostile to a Royalist Cabinet, and to the principle of its formation—the change in the electoral law. It had indeed declared as much in its address. This aspect of the Chamber, coupled with the known inclinations of the King not to dissolve it, or undo his own work, and that of M. Decazes, alarmed first M. Roy, and then M. Lainé. Both saw that the Duc de Richelieu had undertaken an important change, which he had not the power to carry out; and both positively refused to join the Ministry which he was trying to form.

The Duc de Richelieu himself began to hesitate. He first relented in his purpose of sending M. Decazes out of the kingdom. He then asked Decazes to form a Ministry; but of course the latter said, or hinted to the Duke, that he should try first. The Duke did so, and offered the Interior to Cuvier, Justice to Simeon, Finance to Mollien, a minister of the Hundred Days, the Marine to Villele, and the War Department to Lauriston. The two latter accepted; but the others refused. And the Duc de Richelieu, in another letter to the King, was obliged to confess his inability to form a new Cabinet after having broken up the old one, and gave in his final resignation.*

In his endeavours to induce the Duc de Richelieu to retain the post of Prime Minister, the King had held out

* See Appendix.

as a threat, that if the Duc de Richelieu absolutely declined, he should be obliged to reappoint M. de Talleyrand to be head of a Ministry. This he knew would alarm and influence the friend of the Emperor Alexander. But Richelieu replied, were there no other men in the empire except himself, and * * *, as Talleyrand was designated in the correspondence, who were fit to be Prime Minister? The King had never seriously thought of Talleyrand. The English influence, which could alone have upheld or recommended Talleyrand, had been allowed to die away, unexercised by Castlereagh and Wellington, wisely some will say, honourably all must admit. To choose a Prime Minister, and one of Foreign Affairs, who would not be displeasing to the Emperor of Russia, was therefore the first object of the King and of M. Decazes, as soon as the refusal of M. de Richelieu had made it his turn to form a Cabinet. Richelieu recommended a Marshal, Marmont or Macdonald, capable men both, but either might have differed with or eclipsed Decazes. Since a general officer seemed to suffice in dignity, they thought of General the Marquis Dessolles. He was one of the first who had rallied to the Bourbons, and who was personally known to Alexander. Count Nesselrode, who happened to be in Paris, and was consulted as to the choice of Dessolles, approved of it. The adherence of foreign Courts was considered necessary to a French Minister, especially to one who, with M. Decazes, was determined on keeping the support of the semi-Liberals. It must be recollected, that this year was the epoch of the break-out of revolutionary sentiments and violence in Germany. The people of that country had hitherto restrained their impatience at the complete breach of every promise of freedom made to them in 1814. An

effervescence showed itself amongst the students of the universities, who had formed patriotic clubs, which soon became revolutionary associations. Whilst such turbulence menaced beyond the Rhine, it was important that the French Cabinet should not be suspected in its cautious liberalism of favouring any great European movement; and hence the precautions of the King and of M. Decazes.

On the last day of the year 1818, the new Ministry announced itself by the appearance of the Baron Louis in the Chamber in his old position of Finance Minister. M. de Serre took the post of Minister of Justice, which he deserved for his staunch support of the electoral law. Gouvion St. Cyr remained in the War department. Portal, a merchant of Bordeaux, replaced Molé in the Marine, and Decazes assumed the Home Ministry in lieu of Lainé. Pasquier did not take office. He probably did not consider the Ministry a durable one. Decazes sought to appoint Molé ambassador to London, but the King objected, attributing to him in a degree the resignation of M. de Richelieu. The defeat of the Minister's projects, and his consequent resignation, was a source of the greatest mortification and disappointment to the Royalists. In the Chamber, divers proposals were made for bestowing upon him a national recompense; and one of these gave rise later to one of the bitterest questions of dispute between aristocracy and democracy. The proposal was to bestow an estate upon the Duc de Richelieu, to be erected into a *majorat*; in other words, settled in entail upon the eldest of the family wearing the title. This corresponded with one of the well-known projects of the Duke himself when Minister, which was to establish *majorats* for the Peers, and so render landed and entailed property requisite for each. No proposal

could be more odious to the French, or calculated to excite such fierce animosity. It was considered a far greater outrage upon liberty and equality, than altering the law of election, and was attacked as a far more flagrant and unpardonable breach of the Charter.

M. Decazes, now clothed with the responsibilities of Prime Minister, though not the name, applied his mind strenuously to the difficult task of conciliating and satisfying the liberal party. He determined to make to that great party two great concessions, one a law of ministerial responsibility, the other a law regulating and admitting the liberty of the press. He also determined to meet M. de Villele's continued reproaches of the country being left without provincial or municipal liberties and institutions. M. Guizot, to whom was intrusted that direction in the Home Office which embraced these departments, undertook to draw up this law. M. Villemain, another professor of equal celebrity, was charged in the same ministerial department with all that related to the public press. M. de Serre had been preferred as Minister of Justice for his oratorical and other talents. One of the principles of the Decazes ministry was to enlist and employ all the men of intellectual eminence or promise, who would consent to trust to his fortunes and follow his lead.

The most important part of a French ministerial management is the appointment, promotion, and dismissal of the host of those who hold place or commission. The Ministers of the Interior and of Justice have each a legion of agents throughout the provinces, as prefects, judges, commissioners, *procureurs*, whose spirit serves as influence and example. These were now appointed for their liberal tendencies. The War Office was managed in the same

spirit. But what more than all else excited the clamour of the ultra-Royalists was the mitigation of the decrees of banishment past against the surviving members of the National Convention. The King cordially joined in this act of clemency, and permitted even the regicides, Tallien and Cambacères, to return to France.

The change of ministry, the agitation of the crisis, and the unprepared state of policy after it allowed the two first months of the session to pass away in idleness. The columns of the journals, void of parliamentary debates, were filled with reports of the celebrated trial of those accused of the murder of Fualdes. The political truce was at length broken by the Chamber of Peers, the majority of which having given its full adherence to the Duc de Richelieu in his efforts to form a new ministry on the principle of a change in the electoral law, now undertook to follow out their plan, and avenge M. de Richelieu fallen, since they could not support him in power. On the 20th of February the Marquis Barthelemy made a motion for altering the constitution of electoral colleges. Not one-third of the electors, he said, had taken part in the votes on the last occasion. The taxes being now paid by twelfths, a great many were able to get themselves inscribed on the electoral list by the payment of one-twelfth, as indicative of an annual amount of taxes, which in reality they never paid. Hence the electoral franchise was usurped by the poorer classes. The fact of considering the patent duty as a direct contribution also admitted shopkeepers to vote, which was another usurpation, electoral rights, according to the Marquis, being the exclusive privilege of owners of land and houses. The debates of the Chamber of Peers were hitherto secret. On this occasion

every peer sent his speech to the journals. Count Lanjuinais was the most enthusiastic supporter of Ministers. He denounced the plot which had been hatched at Aix-la-Chapelle against a popular law of election. The machinations of the Royalists throughout France, especially in the west, where they were arming and forming secret societies, bespoke the determination to bring back by force upon the nation a retrograde Government, even at the risk of civil war. M. de Fontanes was one of those who developed most powerfully the dangers of the present law, which in the hands of a second Cardinal Richelieu, he said, of a minister possessed of great talents, free from scruples, and the implicit confidence of the King, might cause whom he pleased to be elected, by the fraudulent payment of voters' contributions, or by the Government. Napoleon, he said, had considered no electoral body safe, except the great landed proprietors, who though not imperialists must ever be against revolution. M. Decazes, who had been created a peer, spoke in a tone and with expressions far more absolute than pleased the noble House. He represented the electoral law as something fixed and definitive, and as one the modification of which was not to be taken into consideration. The friends of the Count d'Artois replied by almost a tumult of disapprobation; and by a large majority the Chamber set aside the order of the day, and voted for taking the motion into consideration.

The next day M. Laffitte developed a counter proposition in the Lower Chamber. "What an absurdity," exclaimed he, "to consider as too democratic a law which, out of 29 millions of individuals, confers the elective franchise upon 100,000! But the would-be aristocracy revolts against industry having any influence in elections. They

would have this monopolized by the landed interest. 'Industry, the daughter of Freedom, protects its parent. Industry and Liberty progress and decline together; and hence the enemies of the one attack the other." Laffitte proposed an address to the King on behalf of that electoral law which the Peers denounced.

Menaced by the majority of the Upper Chamber, M. Decazes lost no time in proposing to the King to break this majority, by restoring to their rank the Peers removed from the Chamber by Prince Talleyrand on the King's return in 1815. The King hesitated; he preferred making fresh nominations; and even this appeared to him an extreme and regretable necessity. General Dessolles declared firmly, that there was no alternative, except either to overcome the Peers' majority by a creation, or to form a new Cabinet of the ultra-Royalists. Louis still hesitated, when two circumstances occurred which kindled his ire, and precipitated, in warranting, his resolution. The first was the rejection by the Chamber of Peers of the new law changing the period of the financial year. The inconvenience of its commencing on the 1st of January, in the first week of the Chambers' sitting, had lately been felt. The law remedying it was no party measure; yet the Peers, naming a Commission to draw up a hurried report, proceeded at once to reject it: thus exercising their power peremptorily on questions which exclusively concerned the Chamber of Deputies, and upon which it held an opinion decidedly the reverse. The other was a motion, made by Count Castellane, to repeal the law against seditious cries, personally outraging the monarch. The King consented to name a large batch of peers. M. Decazes presented him with a list of seventy. Most of those excluded by

Prince Talleyrand were reinstated. Six of the Marshals hitherto excluded, Suchet, Mortier, Davoust, Jourdan, Moncey, and Lefebvre were of the number, as were Count Becker, Belliard, Claparede, Dejean, Latour Maubourg, Rapp, Admirals Truguet and Verhuel. Amongst the civilians were the names of David, Chaptal, Mollien, Lacèpede, De Barante, D'Argout, Portalis, all notabilities of imperial origin. The King added one or two names to this Bonaparte list, and smilingly observed to M. Decazes, it was in order that there might be some of the King's friends amongst the Ministers' partizans. Of those ejected in 1815, Louis would not sanction the readmission of either the Duc de Praslin or the Count de Segur. He had no objection to urge against the men of the Revolution and the Empire, who, sons of the people, had risen to eminence, whilst the house of Bourbon was under eclipse; but representatives of ancient families and of names historic under the old monarchy, who had been in the court of Louis XVI., such men Louis XVIII. could not forgive for having taken posts in the court of the usurper. By the new creation the number of Peers was augmented from 208 to 270.

When this motion, carried in the Peers for the modification of the electoral law, came regularly before the Chamber of Deputies, an imprudent argument, made use of by M. de Villele, gave rise to a tumultuous and indignant scene, not favourable to the Royalists. M. de Villele objected, that under the present law it was in the minister's power to create a number of fictitious votes; for instance, said the orator, there is the department of the Gard, which counted but 991 electors in 1817, and which in 1818 was suddenly augmented to 1598. M. de St. Aulaire, the

sitting deputy, said that he had been elected by upwards of one thousand votes; but he admitted, that the increased number of electors who came to vote at Nismes, did so through the exertions of the Prefect, Count d'Argout. The efforts of this functionary were directed so assuring the Protestant electors, that they might come and vote freely, without incurring the danger of assassination. Previous to the elections of 1815 thirteen Protestant electors had been massacred at Nismes, and their brethren had fled to the mountains, from whence they did not venture to give any fresh votes till the last election. The assassins of 1815 had never been punished, and naturally the Protestant electors could not deem themselves secure. The reply was crushing to M. de Villele, who ventured to ask why the assassins had not been punished by the Government? To this the rejoinder was still more crushing. The Government of the day consisted of M. de Villele's friends, who would not allow M. d'Argenson even to allude to the subject in the Chamber.

In the discussion, which continued on the subject of electoral law, M. Royer Collard with great lucidity and force explained the nature and condition of such a law, which both sides perverted and misunderstood. Royalists and Ministers openly avowed their desire of an electoral law, which would of itself influence the elections, and either leave them in the hands of the territorial magnates, or in those of Government. The electoral law, instead of doing either, should be merely the medium to make known the prevailing sentiments and interests of the country. The fault found at that moment with the electoral law was, that it resulted in a middle-class opinion being powerful in Parliament, not altogether dominant, but strong enough to

enable wise ministers to introduce laws, and at the same time to govern or to satisfy the middle class. This was the great excellence of the law, which was nevertheless on this very account denounced as democracy.

Lainé's opinion was that the fundamental principle of the present law, direct election, and the franchise limited to payers of 300 francs, should be preserved, but he objected to the elections taking place in the chief towns and in one college, which annulled local influence. M. Decazes, in reply, made the fullest and most eloquent defence both of the principles of the bill and of the elections taking place in chief towns. There, he said, were concentrated intelligence and wealth. There were felt and exercised the influence of large proprietors, but checked by the influence and intelligence of Government functionaries well acquainted with the necessities of the time and of the State. There, moreover, were agglomerated manufacturing interests and commercial ones. The influence of the true aristocracy, that of the mingled aristocracy not merely of birth and acres, but of all kinds of wealth and influence, were felt, and whoever would set up any other aristocracy or build power upon it, would fail in the end and perish with it.

In the opinion of the Cabinet, the Law of Ministerial Responsibility equalled in importance that of the Liberty of the Press. In a country like France, where commotion and conspiracies so often occurred to compel the Government to assume or to demand extraordinary power, a law rendering the accusation of Ministers regular and facile, seemed likely to reconcile to this law of exception which were so continually holding constitutional rights in suspense. Ministerial responsibility, however, in a country

of *coups-d'etât* and popular tumult lies in events, not in laws. In any circumstances under which a Government is liable to formal accusation, the people are never likely to await parliamentary or legal procedure. A law of ministerial responsibility in France, and indeed in most countries, is an idle effort of legislative ingenuity.

A law granting or regulating the freedom of the press was far more practical and important. The preparation of the law or laws, for it was divided into three projects, was intrusted to M. De Serre. He prefaced this announcement by the doctrine, that the press was a mere instrument, a facility for making known opinions, that the crimes and misdemeanours which it might be guilty of were those already foreseen and marked in the Code. The only difficulty was to apply the punishment allotted to such offences to the right person. The proposed law first established that to provoke to a crime is to be an accomplice in it. The provocation, followed by no effect, was punished with shorter imprisonment and lesser fine. Seditious cries, the wearing rebellious colours, degrading the royal symbols, attacking the rights guaranteed by the Chamber, were considered provocations. Outrages on public morality and religion were subjected to penalty; offences against the person of the King, or against the royal family, members of the Chamber, or foreign sovereigns. Defamation affecting the honour or consideration of any person was visited by a gradation of penalties, that against public functionaries or foreign ambassadors especially marked. The most important of these laws was the last, which freed the journals from the censorship or the necessity of royal authorization, but obliged them to furnish security, 10,000 francs *rentes*, capital to the

amount of £400 a-year interest, leaving them to the jurisdiction of the tribunals and the laws affecting other publications.

In the discussion of these connected laws the orators on either side did not perceive that the emancipation of the daily press rendered any legislation about other kinds of publications comparatively unimportant. Hitherto the publication, seizure, prosecution, and confiscation of books and pamphlets formed the chief consideration, for to this mode of making known their opinions parties of influence and writers of talent had recourse. From the moment the press was thrown open and the censorship abolished, the daily journals, especially in a country where there is so much impatience and so short a memory as the French have, must necessarily absorb and replace all other modes of printed discussion and attack.

The first objection urged against the proposed law was the heavy penalties inflicted upon outrages against *public morality*. Benjamin Constant, newly elected a Deputy, made himself the organ of these objections, which were chiefly directed against the vagueness of the term. The ultra-Royalists, however, widened the dissension by insisting on extending the penalties to outrages against religion. The good sense and liberalism of the Chamber, together with its fear lest such a law should be made the instrument of intolerance or persecution, were shown in the rejection of the amendment by 200 against 91 votes. How far the jury should be employed in the judgment of the offences of the press was this year, as the last, a fertile subject of debate. It was decided that all libels against individuals should be tried by judges alone, and juries only admitted when public interests or establishments were attacked.

The admission of the public in the character of jurymen, to participate in judicial functions, was one of the principles which the bureaucracy, or host of *employés*, in France, most cordially disliked. The reproach made to M. Decazes and his system of government was, that it was chiefly founded on the support of ministerial functionaries; yet in this law the interests and cherished ideas of the functionary class were largely and liberally set aside. In the question of defamation or libel, the proof of the accusation was not admitted to be pleaded, except in the case of public functionaries. This produced on their part the strongest opposition. The functionary class had unfortunately, but unavoidably, served two or three dynasties and kinds of government within a short lapse of years, and had probably showed zeal in support of all successively. To reproach them with such acts, or to publish an account of them, was clearly a libel, tending to injure and depreciate their character. Proof being admitted in alleviation of the libel or support of it, the courts of justice might be made the *media* and instruments of such libels. On the other hand, Royer Collard urged that to consider truth a libel was to close up the book of history.

"It is in the nature of government," said that orator, "that history and posterity commence for us each day. And present posterity, if one may be permitted so to speak, is a tribunal more severe than the real posterity; for contemporaries in their judgments take no account of obstacles, or difficulties, or irresistible motives. But we must accept both posterity and history. We can escape from neither the one nor the other, and it is vain to attempt to prevent writers from raking in those chronicles in which the acts of the last thirty years are preserved

and recorded. To seal up such a past from the eyes and the curiosity of the present age would not be possible." The Chamber voted in the liberal sense to allow proof, and leave the judgment to the jury.

One of the most important incidents of this debate upon the press, was the quarrel, and the mutually angry feeling, which a few words produced between M. De Serre and the Royalists. De Serre was a man who, like Chateaubriand, thought that ardent Liberalism and ardent Royalism might be made to harmonize and ally in the same person. As to the Minister who undertook the conduct of the law liberating the press, he was exposed to the attack of the Royalists. Immunity was demanded for all opinions uttered by members of the Chamber in debates. The Royalists disputed the justice of this immunity: in reply De Serre went so far as to argue that the majority of all representative and deliberating assemblies was moderate, sensible, and *healthy*.

"The Convention, for example!" exclaimed La Bourdonnais, with a sneer.

"Ay, even the Convention," rejoined De Serre. "If the majority of the National Convention had never gone to the vote under the influence of personal fears, the crime of regicide would not have been committed."

The broad assertion of the sanity of the Convention shocked the Royalists and delighted the Liberals too much for either of them to pay much attention to the subsequent exclamation. The latter was forgotten, the vindication of the Convention remembered, and De Serre was henceforth looked upon by the Royalists as a Jacobin. They abhorred the laws of the press, as emanating from him, as much as because it set free that power which was

most antagonistic to them. But indeed this was not the first quarrel of the Royalists with De Serre. The enmity was already declared when he was President of the Chamber.

Instead of prudently contenting himself with making one side of the political world his enemies, and striving to counterbalance these by conciliating the others, De Serre, with all the flightiness and self-confidence of genius, imagined he could hold a secure position between them, and that by offending the Liberal party in the same session in which he outraged the Royalists, he should show his impartiality. A discussion happened to arise about the exiles. The King and the Government had shown every desire to allow almost all to return. Nevertheless, in the heat of discussion, De Serre, as Minister of Justice, replying to the demands of the Liberals, declared that Government would prove clement and generous to all, except those guilty of the crime of regicide. Whoever asked restoration for them—he would reply, "Never." The word was emphatic, but not true, for many regicides had been pardoned. Fouché had been the King's Minister, Cambacères was but the other day recalled by this very Government. But for the sake of the oratorical word *jamais*, De Serre dealt the Liberals the defiance. So seriously was it taken, and so important its effect, that the marked separation of the Liberals from the Ministry of M. Decazes dated from it.

It was ungenerous of the Liberals thus to resent the mere errors of tongue and temper of men, who were advancing their cause, undermining the power and influence of the ultra-Royalists, and in truth sacrificing themselves to the vengeance of the reactionary party. Whilst the Liberals

made the utmost use of the press, and were anxious to defend its freedom, in order to employ it more efficiently, the ultra-Royalists and clerical party were striving, appealing to, and seeking to revive the old fanaticism of Frenchmen. For this purpose, they made use of the clergy, and got up missionaries to proceed to the different departments, and preach the necessity of resuscitating the old monarchic and religious principles of the last century. Neither the Government nor the authorities could resist openly a movement to all appearance strictly religious, and, at all events, patronized by that portion of the royal family in which lay the prospect of succession. The consequence was, that many Prefects welcomed these missionaries in the provincial capitals with the greatest pomp, and thus gave the sanction of the King and Government to their denunciators. Had this preaching been confined to the resuscitation of religious feeling, the amendment of moral conduct, the inculcation of even dogmas, it might have been salutary, and could not have been offensive. But the spirit and purpose of these preachers were altogether political. The first object in each district was to make the pious inhabitants do penance, and perform expiations for the sins of the Revolution, not merely for its crimes, but for its benefits. Thus the Liberals of the day, who were partizans of constitutional freedom, were of course confounded, in the ravings of these ignorant and fanatic monks, with the proclaimers of the *sans culotte* Republic, and the worship of the goddess of Reason. Where the Royalists were in force, it was merely left for the Liberals to bow their heads; where the Liberals formed the majority, as at Brest, it was with difficulty they could restrain themselves and the citizens from rising to expel the missionaries by force.

The authorities were obliged, indeed, to do so, in order to preserve peace. For this act, however, they incurred the displeasure of the Minister, who deprived them of their places, fearing the charge of conspiracy directed against themselves.

The ministerial system of placing the Government on a fixed point between the two great and opposite parties, and balancing one against the other, however feasible for a certain length of time, in the Chamber and in the metropolis, was almost from the first impracticable in the provinces. There people knew no medium. Either the landed proprietors and the clergy completely predominated, and in that case the Prefect could only withstand them by calling to his aid the partizans of Imperialism or the Revolution. But, then, it was not moderation; it was the other extreme which triumphed. Thus it was in La Vendée and Le Mans, the Government authorities having rallied the revolutionary purchasers of national property to oppose the clergy and the ultra-Royalists, men of extreme opinions, like Manuel and Lafayette, were returned as Deputies, who gave as much trouble to Ministers as the most ardent Royalists. It was the same in districts where the interests of the Revolution and its changes predominated. At first, moderate men were chosen, but as parties became exacerbated, and they were rendered more so by the liberty of the press allowed them, as well as by the leniency of a more liberal administration, none but extreme partizans were popular or successful. A middle party is, in fact, impossible to form or sustain at the first uprise of constitutional Government, when politicians rush forth with the vehemence of youth and inexperience, each confident and enthusiastic to achieve great things, and

scorning either to conciliate foes, or be turned aside by circumstances. It is only when extreme parties have been allowed to indulge in their onward course, when they have wielded power for a time, and misused it, when they become somewhat disenchanted with power, and the people with the mismanagement of it, that their moderate men have a chance of being listened to, and of exercising wholesome influence. Really moderate men were, indeed, sent to the Chamber in the first elections after the electoral law of Decazes, but it was as liberals, not as moderates, as men of talent, not of compromise. As their wisdom and prudence became more apparent, they were less and less prized; and instead of a middle, or *tiers parti*, or Doctrinaire party gaining ground, as was the dream and the effort of Decazes, they daily lost, the Minister, as well as the several political persons he rallied to him, having, indeed, to fall off either to the right or to the left, as their hopes or their fears, their confidence or their disappointment predominated.

Another circumstance which militated in favour of extreme parties, and discredited that middle and parliamentary party of Decazes and the Doctrinaires, was the narrowness of the Constitution and the franchise, which left such numbers, such interests, such intelligence unrepresented: thus the battle between parties and principles, instead of being fought in the Chambers, was waged in the wide field of the public, each side enlisting not the most steady or desirable partizans, but the most vehement and interested ones. Thus the ultra-Royalists engaged the more monkish of the clergy in their crusade against the men and things of the Revolution, whilst the Constitutionalists, in self-defence, were obliged to fall back and summon

to their aid the inveteracy of the Bonapartists. Whilst one side was stigmatized as Jesuit, the other was denounced as Jacobin, and names and reproaches were bandied backwards and forwards with a blind and unmeaning vehemence which portended civil war.

The emancipation of the press opened another field of contest, more safe than all others, as soon as the public became accustomed to witness it, and had become accustomed to the exaggeration and passion of publicity. But in the first months of its emancipation, the different organs of the press had the effect of so many whirlwinds, agitating and convulsing opinions, raising clouds and storms of controversy, in which anything like a directing hand was unfelt, a calm judgment impossible. Each extreme forthwith established its organ of the press, daily and monthly, not intrusted to the professed journalist, as is the case where freedom of the press has long existed. But the best intellects and the highest personages of either party now seized the pen to vituperate and denounce each other, and to bring all their powers of mind and experience to embitter the questions which divided them. Between these extremes, these Royalist and popular organs, the Ministers launched one or two ministerial prints, circumspect and timid, rational and deprecatory. But their voice was unheard and their timidity bemocked, amidst the louder passions on either side; and M. Decazes and his Cabinet, instead of remaining the arbiters of contending parties, became the object of their combined raillery and rival sport.

CHAPTER XIV.

INSURRECTIONARY SPIRIT THROUGHOUT EUROPE — ELECTION OF GRÉGOIRE — DECAZES PREPARES TO RENDER ELECTORAL LAW LESS LIBERAL—THREE MINISTERS RESIGN—ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF BERRI—ITS CONSEQUENCES—FALL OF DECAZES.

Periods occur in history, when the popular mind, which in general flows like a deep but calm river in its accustomed channel, of a sudden rises to overflow its banks, spreading itself over the country far and wide, suspending labour, destroying the fruits of industry, and precluding all other cares and thoughts so long as the inundation lasts. The middle of the sixteenth century, when the Reformation, commencing amongst the civic and urban classes, spread to the lower, and aroused them, first to agitation and then to arms throughout the extent of Europe, was one of these epochs. The defective state of publicity and communications was the great obstacle to the universal and simultaneous recognition of the new principle. The great want of religious emancipation overcame such obstacles; but each country awakened at different intervals, and made separate efforts, so that whilst some succeeded others succumbed.

Seventeen hundred and eighty-nine was an isolated

movement of the French, produced by causes peculiar to their country, and extending rather by imitation, propagandism, and arms, than by simultaneous impulse. The reaction against Napoleon was far more general, and formed a powerful bond of union, which, however, soon attained its immediate aim. The means of achieving it had been a general appeal to popular feelings and to popular force, so that the middle and lower classes of society throughout Europe were roused from their wonted torpor, from their life of necessities and habits, to feel new wants, new pride, new aspirations, and to entertain new ideas. England, the great motive power of the day, had galvanized all Europe by its indomitable spirit, and its inexhaustible wealth. It filled nations, as well as kings, with envy; and whilst it prompted the more intelligent of the princes in their congresses to promise constitutions to their subjects, and try the experiment of freedom, as a source of wealth and power to themselves more than as that of happiness to their people, the people themselves came to entertain ideas of their rights, as well as of their power and resources, very incompatible with old continental forms of Government.

Had Sovereigns and Governments come forward fairly, as they promised, and as they at first intended, to meet these popular expectations and demands, they might have succeeded in the solid construction and working of constitutional systems, especially in Germany, where education was so universal, and the civic class so developed, without any of those dangerous agglomerations of the working classes, which render Paris and other cities so inflammable. But the King of Prussia was in character all torpor and hesitation. The liberal influence of Stein died away, and

Hardenberg, the veteran minister, shrunk from the blunder of Talleyrand, who introduced a system of Government which inevitably set him aside. The King of Prussia's solemn promise of a constitution, made to the most enlightened part of Germany, he knew not how either to keep or to break, and the consequence was universal discontent. At the same time the enthusiasm of the war had not died away. The strong hands and wills which had swept the French from the plains of North Germany, and broken the power of Napoleon, were not prepared to accept manacles from Frederic William. As there were none, or insufficient means for venting these sentiments, secret societies were naturally formed. The universities of Germany have been ever free from the interference of the police. The professors there were the sole magistrates. As students from all parts of Germany collected in these Universities, there was, of course, greater scope and freedom for association, founded on political discontent. A member of one of these associations, a young student of the name of Sand, pursuing his education at Jena, thought himself called upon to do a great deed for liberty. The celebrated Kotzebue, dramatist and writer, resided at the time at Manheim, on a pension given by the Court of Russia, in return for which he no doubt sent reports to St. Petersburgh of the state of things, such as he could observe them in Germany. These means of livelihood, this subserviency to foreign despotism, however enlightened, appeared to Sand's imagination, treason worthy of death. He also saw glory as well as duty in being the executioner. He, therefore, repaired to Manheim, obtained entrance to Kotzebue's abode, handed a paper to his victim, on which was written " Sentence of Death,"

and at the same moment plunged a dagger into his heart. Sand immediately after rushed forth into the street of quiet Manheim, and avowed the murder, with the exclamation of *Vivat Teutonia!*

This foolish and gratuitous crime, followed by another attempt of the same kind upon another functionary, aroused the attention of the sovereigns to the alarming state of Europe. In Paris, the students of the schools of law gave turbulent proofs in the popularity with which they surrounded M. Bavoux, one of their professors, that they were animated by sentiments similar to those of their German contemporaries. In Spain, the indignation against king and priesthood was threatening an outburst, which was realized in the mutiny of the troops at Cadiz on the 1st of January following. The state of Italy is shown by the fact of several of its kingdoms subsequently imitating the example of Spain. Even in England the reign of the Tories was disturbed by conspiracy and sedition, and by a general and menacing league of the working classes against their superiors, so that even in the classic land of modern liberty the great constitutional guarantees were in the act of being suspended.

Nor was St. Petersburgh itself untroubled. Until the year 1819 the Emperor Alexander remained consistent in his ideas of liberalism. He had given a constitution to Poland and opened its parliament. He proposed separating from Russia the old Polish provinces, in order to restore undiminished the ancient kingdom of Poland. These acts and threats had created, even at St. Petersburgh, an ultra-Russian and autocratic party, opposed to Poland, its freedom and independence, and to the entire of Alexander's liberal policy. In the year 1819 was dated

the celebrated Karamsin's protest against these schemes. Alexander found himself in the same position as Louis XVIII.—the object of accusation and obloquy to the most zealous supporters of his throne, at the very time when the popular party, whom he was favouring, was far from being either grateful or prudent. The knowledge of the French tongue and the connexion between French and Russians, rendered at this time the political writings of Benjamin Constant as popular, as well known, and as influential in St. Petersburgh as in Paris. Secret societies began to be formed in the two capitals of Russia. But Alexander and Louis XVIII. saw reason at the same time to hesitate and to fear, lest their liberal inklings might be creating for them a few lukewarm friends and a great many inveterate enemies. Symptoms of these were manifest in the Russian embassy at Paris, where Pozzo de Borgo, as well as the Austrian and Prussian ministers, frowned upon the liberalism of Decazes, who had Sir Charles Stewart for his only confidant and supporter in the diplomatic corps. The three Courts would have even made a joint remonstrance to Louis against the tendencies of his Ministers, if England had not refused to join in such, and if Lord Castlereagh had not dissuaded Metternich from the idea. Alexander seemed more impelled by his own restlessness and ambition to meddle and to lead in all the affairs of Europe, than by having as yet adopted any principle decidedly inimical to progress. For when Metternich laboured to consolidate the German Confederation, and to use the Frankfort Diet as an instrument to strengthen governments and repress freedom, Alexander himself objected, and stirred his relative of Wurtemberg to resist. At the same time he protested energetically against

the tyrannical government of Sir Thomas Maitland over the Ionians. But the idea that England and its envoy supported liberalism and Decazes in Paris, was alone sufficient to excite Alexander and his envoy to exert all their influence to divert the King's policy in a different line.

In the autumn of 1819, the usual re-election of one-fifth of the number of the Chamber of Deputies was ordered to take place. The press being then free, and the missionaries in full swing of preaching, contending parties put forth their utmost energies. The clamour of both extremes was not only hostile to the Ministry, but more favourable to each other than to the ministerial candidates. M. Decazes relied chiefly on the functionary class; indeed, places are so numerous in France, that almost every politician who supports a Ministry, necessarily becomes a placeman. The two extremes of aristocracy and democracy had thus only to unite in denouncing every candidate that was a functionary or connected with Government, in order to leave the ultras of both sides masters of the field. The Royalists even exclaimed, "Rather return Jacobins than Ministerialists." This sad and passionate mistake, by which the ultra-Royalists destroyed the Throne and sacrificed the King in the first Revolution, promoting excesses and the worst of measures in hopes of ruining whatever Government existed, was nowhere more fully exemplified than in the election of the Isêre. At Grenoble, the chief town of this department, the recollections of Didier's insurrection and the severity of its repression, rendered the Liberals vindictive. They selected as their candidate the regicide Abbé Grégoire, ex-bishop of Blois, his recommendation being the insult which his election would prove to the Royalists and even

to the King. There was a sufficient number of liberal electors of moderate views to have placed the partisans of the Abbé Grégoire in a minority, but the rancour of the ultra-Royalists prevented this. It was fun and vengeance to them to see a regicide elected, and, accordingly, in despair of returning one of their own opinions, they gave their votes to Grégoire, who was returned. For some time the Comte d'Artois had not been on speaking terms with the King. He resented the influence of Decazes and the nullification of his own power. On the news of the election of Grégoire, the Comte d'Artois could not help exclaiming to Louis XVIII., "You behold, Sire, to what they are leading you."—"I see," rejoined Louis, "and will provide for it."

The elections of 1819 introduced to the Chamber General Foy, Baron Mechin, Labbey de Pompières, François de Nantes, Sebastiani. Of fifty-two members re-elected more than one-half were decided Liberals, chiefly at the expense of the Royalists, but also by the defeat of several ministerial candidates. In fact the *Left*, which had commenced the constitutional struggle with two votes, those of Laffitte and Voyer d'Argenson, and which at the promulgation of Decazes' electoral law, thought it much to count twenty-five votes, now mustered nearly one hundred. The re-election of another fifth in the ensuing year promised in all probability to give a majority to the Left, in which Bonapartists in name and in principle came more and more to prevail. Such a result of the elections of 1819, staggered M. Decazes himself. He had opened the sluices to the liberal torrent, and if it did not threaten to sweep away the Throne, it boded most certainly the overthrow of any Ministry, consisting of a middle party

and confining itself to moderate politics. M. Pasquier, who had not joined the Ministry, from doubts of its stability and fears of the electoral law, took credit with Decazes for his sagacity, and drew up a memoir insisting on the necessity of elections no longer taking place solely in the chief town of the department. The friends of M. Decazes allege that the modification, in his opinion, with respect to the electoral law, was owing to the injunction of the King. The King himself was moved by the election of Grégoire, respecting which he felt the reproaches of his brother. The envoys of foreign powers also thought that Liberalism had been carried too far. The Duc de Richelieu, just returned from a tour in the east of Europe, repeated the cry; and M. Decazes imagined that he might bend somewhat before the universal clamour, without destroying the principle of his electoral law. He proposed to allow elections to take place in the different towns of the departments, not in the chief town, where lists of unknown Liberals sent by the Paris committee were adopted from party spirit and without personal knowledge. It might also be required, he thought, that shopkeepers, in order to obtain the franchise by virtue of their paying patent-tax, should have been charged with it and have paid during a year. The latter was certainly but fair, the former no exorbitant change. But it was easy to perceive that concessions would be useless that did not go the length at least of satisfying a certain portion of the Royalists, and that the ground of the electoral law once abandoned, the politicians who did so would inevitably be compelled to draw closer to the Right, and be obliged to make larger sacrifices in order to their being received and sheltered there. These

conflicting views and considerations caused a schism in the Ministry. M. de Serre and Portal joined with Pasquier and Decazes in the new conviction of the latter for the necessity of altering the law, General Dessolles, Gouvion St. Cyr, and Baron Louis, declining to sanction any change in the law. The usual mode of terminating a difference in the Cabinet was had recourse to. A Council was held at which the King was called to preside. Each party was to plead their cause, and his Majesty promised his decision. On the present occasion the opinion of Louis XVIII. was against the recalcitrant Ministers, Dessolles, St. Cyr, and Roy. He approved of the changes meditated by Decazes, which no doubt he himself had considered and recommended. The three Ministers instantly resigned; and the King was under the necessity of forming a new Cabinet.

Of all the personages, who at that time took part in politics, without being carried away by them, the most revered and sagacious was Royer Collard. He is with justice considered the founder of the Doctrinaire school, the first to take a position on intermediate ground, in religion between the disciples of Loyola and those of Voltaire, in Government between divine right and the sovereignty of the people. One of the wisest acts of Louis XVIII. was the appointment of Royer Collard to be President of the Council of Public Instruction, in which position he could hold the balance between the influence of the old philosophic and of the new religious party. But Royer Collard was also a deputy, and took active part in the great questions of the press, of individual liberty, and of the law of elections, in all which his opinions were marked by a profundity, and pronounced

with a precision, which rendered his words oracular and his influence potential. The deputies of the Centre, and more especially of the Right Centre, rallied round him; and with such supports and disciples as Camille Jordan, the Duc de Broglie, Guizot, Beugnot, the school of Royer Collard promised for the moment to be as predominant in the Chamber as it was in the university. But the current of events went not to strengthen moderate opinions or parties in politics. The ministerial patronage which Decazes shed over the Doctrinaires, far from strengthening them, proved a serious cause of weakness, by compromising the young party, and rendering it responsible for the inevitable faults and weaknesses of even a well-intentioned administration. The main support of M. Decazes were the Government functionaries. They composed the greater part of the working majority, of which the Doctrinaires formed a small nucleus; and the Doctrinaires themselves accepted office, either in the university, the administration, or the Council of State. In vain did several of them protest at different times against the acts of the Ministry; in vain did they profess their independence; they became so enveloped and compromised by the policy of M. Decazes, that the same obloquy covered both. Royer Collard, therefore, determined to retire from office. As head of the Education Board, he was not always able to resist the demands of the clerical party, or to obtain that support of the Prime Minister against them which he desired. He foresaw the overthrow of the balanced system of administration; and deemed it wise to withdraw in time, not to be overwhelmed and identified with its fall. He selected for his resignation the moment of M. Decazes' abandonment

of the electoral law; and when the three Ministers withdrew from the Cabinet on that ground, M. Royer Collard, without assigning any reason publicly, threw up the Presidency of the University Council, and deprived M. Decazes of his great moral support. Other members of the Doctrinaire party, less sagacious and circumspect, as well as less liberal, continued to lend their support to M. Decazes after the formation of his new Ministry, and not only approved of the project of altering the electoral law, but drew up a much larger scheme of change themselves. This was developed by M. de Stael in a volume; but how little chance such a scheme had of becoming popular in France, may be judged from the fact that every change was an assimilation to the English system, establishing county separate from town elections, abrogating the ballot, and having the entire of the Chamber at once elected for a long and settled period.

M. Decazes, who had been virtually Prime Minister, on the retirement of his three liberal colleagues, openly assumed that position. M. Pasquier took the Foreign Department. An old, lame, and popular soldier, Latour Maubourg, was recalled from the London embassy to the War Office, and M. Roy once more received the portfolio of Finances. Lamartine remarks, that if at this moment Louis XVIII. had sacrificed Decazes, and given the Home Department, with the lead in the Ministry, to Lainé, he would have conciliated the Royalists, gained strength to combat the Radicals (so he already designates the liberal party), and have succeeded in carrying on that system of a balanced or balancing administration, which was the prime idea of that prince in politics. The King, however, was determined as yet to make no concessions

to the ultra-Royalists, which would admit these men to power, however he was willing to adopt or draw closer to some of their ideas.

The Session opened on the 29th November. The King congratulated the Chamber upon peace, plenty, on the increase of the Duke of Berri's family, and on the agreement with Rome, which in completing the number of bishops, still preserved intact the liberties of the National Church. The speech then hinted at the prevalence of a vague but real disquietude as to the duration of the present happy political state. The violence of factions caused alarm, from their ardour to dominate and their boldness in expressing their designs. These symptoms had suggested the necessity of modifying some of the reglementary forms of the Charter.

"The moment has come for fortifying the Chamber of Deputies, and withdrawing it from the annual action of parties, giving it a duration more consonant to the interests of public order, and of national respect abroad. I have given orders," added the monarch, "for the preparation of laws insuring individual liberty, impartial judgment, with the regular and faithful administration of departments and communes."

The royal speech, and the changes which it timidly proposed, was not what most occupied the thoughts of members. The election and supposed presence of the regicide Grégoire in the Chamber made all the Royalists shudder with rage, although they in vain sought the obnoxious Abbé on the benches of the Left. He had not yet appeared; nor indeed was it his own ambition that had thrust him again into public life. The Liberals even offered Decazes that he should resign if in return

the Ministers would promise to uphold the electoral law. But the insult of the election had been perpetrated. Its effect on the King's mind was to remove instantaneously the coldness between him and his brother, and thus draw him closer to that reactionary party from which he had, not without pain and sacrifice, held aloof. The imprudent act of Grégoire's election, the act of the party, was not to be washed away. The committee charged with verifying the election had found the means of declaring it illegal, without stirring the question of regicide. Not more than half the deputies of a department could reside elsewhere than within its limits. The Isère had chosen several strangers, and Grégoire was amongst the last. The Royalists, however, would not accept of any subterfuge. They were determined to expel the regicide because he was such. Lainé, the President, volunteered to express their opinions, which sufficiently shows how incapable he was of continuing in the middle path marked out by Decazes. Lainé insisted on expelling Grégoire as *unworthy* "What need was there of a law? Such laws were not written or kept in archives. They were not subject to popular or sovereign caprices, but were preserved in an incorruptible tabernacle beyond the influence of revolution, the power of time and place—that law was Reason and Justice, and in France, moreover, it was known by the name of Honour." Constant and Manuel in vain pleaded the Charter. The former adduced the example of Louis XVIII. summoning Fouché, another regicide, to his councils. To this Pasquier replied strangely, that whatever right the King might have to overlook such a crime, an electoral body had not that right. Grégoire was excluded from the Chamber after a fierce and prolonged debate; but whilst

Pasquier and Lainé countenanced this violence, M. Decazes, wielding the royal authority, and vainly anxious to conciliate the Liberals, allowed almost every remaining exile to return to France, regicides not excepted. This exposed him to the reproach of inconsistency from the Liberals, of insincerity and treason from the Royalists.

Whilst M. Decazes was absorbed by the dangers which menaced his power and the King's personal ascendancy from the ultra-Liberals, he might have perceived a more ominous and important symptom on the opposite benches of the Chamber, a symptom which manifested itself in the first debates. There was a more than ordinary difference of opinion, in fact a complete schism, between the ultra-Royalists of the extreme Right, and the Royalists who followed the more cautious lead of M. de Villele. "M. de la Bourdonnaye, a man of talent," says Lamartine, "but of that talent which never improves or ripens," was the leader of the extreme Right. M. de Villele was the chief of that section, which looked to no distant accession to power in alliance with those friends of the monarchy whom M. Decazes in his progress had thrown off to the Right. Such were Lainé, Richelieu, Ravez, just elected President of the Chamber, and even Pasquier, those men, in fact, who had arranged under the ministry of the Duc de Richelieu that reconciliation with Villele on the ground of a change in the electoral law which Decazes had the year before defeated. The alteration of the commencement of the financial year from the 1st of January to the 1st of April had been rejected by the Peers, and now necessitated at the commencement of the Session another vote of provisional credit. When the Ministers came to demand

it, La Bourdonnaye and his friends vehemently opposed it.* Villele and his party supported the demand, alleging that they would cause factious embarrassment to the King's Government.

But the new electoral law was the chief occupation of M. Decazes. By it alone he could preserve himself against the enmity of the two great parties closing upon him from either side. In its preparation he listened to the younger of the Doctrinaires, whose scheme we have described; and he ended by employing them, especially Guizot and Villemain, to draw up the law. It was, as we have said, a transcript or adaptation of the English system: elections for the landed interest distinct from those for the town interest; septennality, or a period approaching it; open voting, to insure the influence of wealth. Over the task of conciliating such conflicting principles and parties Decazes lingered long, and deferred from week to week to bring forth the electoral law, hesitating before he should play what he felt to be his last political card.

The Minister, moreover, found it difficult to change

* La Bourdonnaye's speech on this occasion affords a good specimen of his eloquence and talent as well as of his arguments. "That which I fear," said he, "more than anarchy, is the falsehood of the ministerial system which leads to it. The oscillation of the political balance (*basçule*) agitated its cradle; important concessions developed its infancy; a ministry, which has recompenses only for enemies, fortified it by all that the confusion of right and wrong, just and unjust, can do to weaken public morals, and by all the influence that a disregard of principle can have in depriving laws of their sanction and power of its guarantee. When a common peril unites all the friends of order, at the head of whom a Minister should place himself, the President of the Council keeps apart, and awaits the issue of the combat, allowing the majority to drift where it may."

M. Decazes, in reply, denied that he sought to form any other intermediary party, save that which existed in the general good sense of the country. M. de la Bourdonnaye, whose party is confined, perhaps, to his own single individuality, reproaches a Minister with having no party—and that is true, for he ought to have no party other than the broad nation.

one part of his system without remodelling all. The desertion of that on which he had based his power, and the semi-support of the Liberals, exposed him to the denunciations of that press which he had emancipated. The journals could be checked or moderated in their attacks by nothing less than prosecution, which depended for success on the humour of juries and of judges, the one unfavourable to a government in the decline of popularity, the other beginning to fall off from a Minister tottering in power. Decazes felt that the combined attacks of Royalist and Liberal press would prove too much for him. He was thus led to meditate restrictions upon it too—another commencement of recantation. The measure, or the necessity for it, so disgusted the Minister of Justice, De Serre, that unable to oppose, and reluctant to aid, he became ill, and went away to recruit his health. Thus deprived of his principal law adviser, the Minister fell into a troublesome quarrel with almost all the chief personages of the Liberal party, who had formed an association for defending the liberty of the press. The Crown lawyers had discovered the existence of this association, and had instituted a prosecution against it. This, of course, was the subject of fresh diatribes in the journals, and renewed public agitation in the public; Decazes appearing not only as the destroyer of his own law, conferring free and direct election, but also of his two measures for emancipating the press.

Never, in fact, did an unfortunate Minister so gibbet himself in a vain and suicidal attempt to preserve power in a constitutional country after all received and legal modes of sustaining it had failed. Had M. Decazes not been the royal favourite, he would have long since escaped naturally and

honourably from a difficult and dangerous position; and his quitting it in season with honour and consistency would have left open a hundred future chances of which he might have in time availed himself. But the King's friendship, which had at first been a wing to bear him up, hung now as a weight to prevent his standing upright.

During the month of January, and the commencement of February, unimportant questions occupied the Chambers, which were in expectation of the new electoral law. But petitions on behalf of menaced rights, and other disputed questions, occasioned some skirmishing, and led to trials of strength, which showed parties in the Chamber of Deputies to be pretty equally divided, the majority being but of one or two on either side. In this state of suspense, the two political armies being arranged in each other's presence, and in expectation of a decisive struggle, there occurred, on the 13th of February, a startling and sad event, which changed the face of politics altogether, and swallowed up all considerations and debates respecting Government principles or theories in one deep and but too naturally-created burst of sentiment, rage and indignation.

The Duke of Berri, the youngest of the two sons of the Count d'Artois, born in 1778, was the only member of the restored family who possessed the attractions and vivacity of youth. He was not distinguished in feature by any traits of a kingly or noble origin. No son of the Revolution could show more vulgar face or figure. Yet he was robust and frank; and his temper, petulant and good-natured, corresponded well with the great monarchic hero of the Royalists, Henri Quatre. Unpopular with the army, whose Bonapartist celebrities he could not stomach, unknown to the nation, the Duke de Berri still had at

Court the reputation of not associating himself with all the bigotry of his line. His family had married the Duke de Berri, in 1816, to the Princess Caroline of Naples. The Duchess had had two daughters,* and Royalists looked with anxiety to the birth of a male heir, who might perpetuate the dynasty, nor suffer the Crown to lapse to the Orleans branch, so tainted with revolutionary reminiscences and crimes. The Duke de Berri concentrated and represented the hopes of the Royalist party.

At this very time the steps of this apparently fortunate and adored prince were watched by a man, who had concentrated in himself, to a strange degree of intensity, that republican and revolutionary sentiment, which, born in 1790, became developed in the years which immediately succeeded into an unexampled tissue of error, ruthlessness, and crime. Afterwards crushed, its remaining energies were turned to military triumph, which being achieved over the despots of Europe, satisfied the pride of the Jacobins in arms. When the military glory evaporated, the Jacobin element remained, an ascetic, envious, fanatic spirit, very much resembling that which animated, two centuries back, the monks who assassinated the Henrys; although his sprung from the hatred of that monarchic and religious bigotry, which prompted them to employ the poniard. Louvel was a journeyman saddler, whose boyhood was passed amongst the worst scenes of the Revolution. He had been one of the followers of the theo-philanthropic sect of La Reveilliere Lepaux. Like most humble men of his education and principles, he had transferred his worship of liberty to that of military glory, and had made an idol of Napoleon, whom he followed to Elba. Return-

* One of them died; the other is the present Duchess of Parma.

ing from thence, he caught up the general and popular cry of hatred to the Bourbons, swelled to rabid sentiment by the reports of the capture and sufferings of Napoleon. Rendered fanatic by sentiments, too current in the popular voice and in the public press, Louvel resolved to wreak vengeance with his own hands upon the dynasty he hated, and slay its princes, one after the other, if he could reach them. The Duke de Berri was to be his first victim.

On Sunday, the 13th of February, immediately preceding Carnival, there was a representation at the opera. The Duke and Duchess de Berri were amongst the audience. About eleven o'clock, after the first act of the ballet had concluded, the Duchess wished to retire. The Duke conducted her to the carriage, with the intention of returning himself, and seeing the end of the ballet. As he stood at the door of the carriage, into which he had handed the Duchess, and seen the door closed, Louvel, thrusting aside an aide-de-camp, laid one hand on the Prince's left shoulder, and with the other stuck a dagger into his right breast. It was the Theatre Louvois, in the *Place* of that name. The assassin left the dagger in the wound, and escaped round the neighbouring corner into the Rue Richelieu.

The unfortunate Duke, in the meantime, tottered, and exclaimed that he was assassinated. The Duchess rushed from the carriage at these words, and accompanied her husband as he was borne, profusely bleeding, into the theatre, and finally into the little withdrawing-saloon behind his box. The moment he recovered his senses, the Prince was aware of his fate; he felt that the blow was mortal. His exclamation was first for his wife, that he might die in her arms. She had not quitted his side, and her garment was bathed in his blood.

The members of the Royal family hastened one after the other to the little room in which the Prince lay dying. One of his first demands was for an ecclesiastic. Another of his desires was to see two girls, his illegitimate daughters, born in London. The Prince recommended them to the care of his wife. His last anxiety seemed to be to procure the pardon of the man who had assassinated him, and who, he already learned, had no personal grievance or cause of complaint against him. The King, who arrived latest, was obliged to promise the dying Prince that his murderer should be forgiven. Medical skill was in vain exerted to afford the Prince relief. The blood, which escaped from the wound into the chest, each moment threatened suffocation. He demanded to be turned on his left side, and no sooner was his request granted, than he expired. The Duchess de Berri, whom the King sought to lead away from the melancholy scene, craved in an agony of tears, that she might be allowed to quit, with her children, a country where her family could expect nothing save crime and ingratitude.*

The assassin had already undergone examination. In escaping from the spot of his crime, he had already reached the archway beneath the Royal Library, which leads to the Rue Vivienne, when the waiter of a café stopped, and enabled the sentinel to secure him. Brought to the guard-house of the opera, and pressed with questions as to who or what could have instigated him to such an act, Louvel replied, "My opinion." "What opinion?" "That the Bourbons are tyrants and enemies of France." "Why have singled out the Duke de Berri?" "He was the most

* Roullet, Notice Historique de l'Evénement de 13 Février. Roullet was attached to the opera.

young and hopeful of the race." When news of the assassination reached the public, they filled every mind with consternation. The Royalists felt that a blow, but too well directed, had been aimed against the dynasty, and against legitimacy itself; whilst the Liberals, seeing no advantage in what had taken place, were struck by the obloquy it would cast upon all engaged in opposition, at the new power and the vindictive spirit with which such an event would arm and inspire the reactionists. The anger and suspicions of the Royalists had been previously concentrated upon M. Decazes, and their impulse as well as policy was now to throw upon him all the odium and the fault of such a crime. Whilst some accused the Minister's system of leniency and indifference, of having offered scope and facilities to the assassin, others did not scruple to tax M. Decazes as an actual accomplice, nay, as a suborner of the crime.

Yet if any party had been influential in producing the act of Louvel, it was those extreme parties which pursued Decazes with their hatred; it was the mad and vindictive reaction of the Royalists, and the frank Bonapartism of the ultra-democrats. Yet these guilty parties contrived to throw the odium of the Prince's murder upon Decazes and his system. As, indeed, it is too generally the rule, that the moderate who seek to intervene between two mad and hostile extremes, become the scape-goat for the follies and crimes of both.

"Party," said Louis XVIII. to Decazes, "will instantly set about making the most of this event. The ultra-Royalists, who beset and hate me as well as you, will accuse me of blindness and insensibility, if I support you. Policy and friendship, however, unite to render me firm in not de-

livering France into their hands. They would take but a very short time to destroy it. I must not sacrifice the country to my personal griefs. I will resist, and you shall not quit me."

The Chamber, indeed, had no sooner opened, and been officially made acquainted with the death of the unfortunate Duke, than one of its furious partizans rose to accuse M. Decazes as an accomplice of Louvel. Villele in vain endeavoured to restrain M. Claussel from such extravagance; and La Bourdonnaye proposed to substitute for such impeachment an address to the King, praying his Majesty to put down revolutionary doctrines, and the journals which preached them, they being the true instigators and accomplices of the crime. General Foy supported the proposal of an address to the King; but recommending that it should be merely expressive of the grief of the Chamber, a sentiment in which all joined, and that it would be better and more decorous not to mingle with it political views or measures. "To no party," exclaimed Foy, "can this event be so deplorable as to the friends of freedom, for none can doubt that their antagonists will turn the present conjuncture to their advantage, in seeking to deprive the country of those liberties which the King had granted." The Chamber for the present contented itself with adopting the motion of General Foy.

The King in the meantime summoned to join in the discussions of the Cabinet Council those who had fallen off from it and from him, with the idea that M. Decazes was making too many concessions to the Liberals. M. de Fontanes, Lally-Tollendal, Portalis, Mounier, Garnier, De Levis were summoned, and supplicated by the King not to allow him to fall into the hands of the ultras. The

best mode they could devise was to adopt the measures, which the ultras expected, such as the suspension of the liberties of the person and the press, and at the same time a modification of the electoral law.

Baron Pasquier introduced a law suspending the liberty of the press in the Chamber of Peers. M. Decazes brought forward a new electoral law himself in the Lower Chamber. Those who witnessed his appearance on the occasion, represent the Minister as broken in spirit, his countenance betraying the recent agitation of his mind, and his voice trembling beneath the double task of defending himself from calumny, and abrogating these liberal concessions, which himself had such pains in procuring. Whilst M. Claussel persisted in his accusation of Decazes as an accomplice of Louvel, a challenge to which the Minister's friends merely and wisely replied by denouncing Claussel as a calumniator, the organ of the ultras turned the Duke de Berri's assassination into a subject of glee and exultation for the fall which it occasioned to Decazes, though of commiseration for the unfortunate Prince. The editor of the *Drapeau Blanc* attacked the Minister with such ferocity, that a prosecution was commenced. At this the other Royalist prints made merry, representing the fiery editor as a Cossack, not amenable to either sense or discipline, but useful and amusing as a partizan. Chateaubriand expressed, in the *Conservateur*, the well-known epitaph on Decazes' political death, by saying, *qu'il avait glissé dans le sang*, that his foot had slipped in the blood of the murdered Prince.

The new electoral law, which the tottering Minister did not shrink from bringing forward, although a grain of wisdom would have sufficed to show the expediency of

leaving such a task at such a time to others, was, first, the augmentation of the numbers of deputies from 257 to 430. The original number was to be elected as before by *arrondissement* or districts. In addition to this, the district electors in their colleges were to elect electors paying a higher rate of taxes (40*l.*) to form the departmental colleges, and return what we may call the county member.

The introduction of such a law, for the avowed purpose of combating the rapid growth of the liberal party, accompanied, moreover, by the suspense of the newly-granted liberties of the person and the press, was more than sufficient to alienate the liberals from M. Decazes. And yet this party, seeing themselves menaced by the ultra-Royalists with the increased power, which the catastrophe of the Duke de Berri gave them, shrunk from joining in any measure or any vote, which would cast M. Decazes from office. That Minister too, even whilst introducing his repressive laws, which the circumstances of the time seemed to call for and impose, was not blind to the fact, that his only chance of still retaining power, lay in conciliating the liberals, and in striking a severe blow against the ultra-Royalists, and the Count d'Artois. The Minister shrunk from an act so bold. There would have been some difficulty in working up the King to sanction such a policy and at all events, it could scarcely be accomplished at a time when the Count d'Artois had been bereaved by the hand of the assassin, of the support and the hopes of his house.

It sufficiently depicts the old court party, opposed to Decazes, that, weak as he was, they durst not attack him in Parliament, or seek to overthrow him by a hostile vote.

Such zealots, indeed, as Claussel de Coussergues, threatened impeachment against the accomplice of Louvel. But Villele deprecated such folly, and the Royalists depended much more on winning the personal predilections of the King from his favourite Minister, than on the Parliamentary strength or tactics.

An intrigue for this purpose more worthy of the seventeenth century and the Courts of Louis XIII. or XIV., than of the King and the habits of 1820, has been recounted by a confidant of the chief actors in it.* Its seriousness and actual influence are credited and attested by Lamartine. The story is, that one of the followers and courtiers of the Count d'Artois, a worshipper with him of the creed of pure royalism, seeing or imagining that the attachment of the King to direct election, to the freedom of the press, and to the conciliation of the liberals, was owing to his Majesty's personal friendship and intimacy with M. Decazes, considered that the first step towards undermining the liberals and depriving them of the Royal support, was to substitute another personal favourite for M. Decazes. The cunning courtier was M. Sosthene de le Rochefoucauld, of whom Lamartine draws a very chivalric portrait. Yet never was man more unchevaleresque in appearance or in speech than M. Sosthene. Instead of the *preux chevalier*, he looked just the man, who would not shrink from presenting the old King with a mistress or a *quasi*-mistress, in order to destroy the credit of an obnoxious minister. In England, we apply a very different term, from that of chivalric, to such an office.

Madame Du Cayla, a widow of considerable attractions

* The Abbé Liatuaud's memoir.

and great powers of conversation, after the fashion of that day, when the affectations of piety and gallantry were closely intermingled, was besought by M. Sosthene to throw herself in the King's way, by presenting a petition or feigning any other excuse. Her attractions, it was calculated, could not fail to make an impression on the monarch; and Madame Du Cayla was advised to make the most of the influence and the empire which she might thus acquire, to wean the monarch from M. Decazes, and to bring him over from his naughty liberalism to pious and proper conservatism. Of course the lady protested at first against playing the part, which M. de la Rochefoucauld represented to be that of Madame de Maintenon by the side of Louis XIV., or of Esther by that of Ahasuerus, but which others might think more justly illustrated by a Pompadour or a Dubarry, making use of their fascination to overthrow a Duke de Choiseul. The office was accepted by the lady. Access to the King was procured for her; and we are gravely told, that the pious Count d'Artois and the solemn M. de Villele built their hopes upon such a notable manœuvre, and deemed it more honourable and safe, than the open path of Parliamentary opposition. Admitting all that Lamartine asserts of Madame Du Cayla's immaculate chastity and Louis XVIII.'s frigid temperament, we must still be allowed to characterize the whole transaction as something very mean and very vile, one in which M. de la Rochefoucauld figures as a character, which we would not name, and in which Madame Du Cayla, if what has been advanced be true, appears as an intriguer, very unworthy of praise from so eminent a writer as M. de Lamartine. The whole circumstances, indeed, demonstrate the imbecility

and immorality of a party, which condescended to serve or to save what it considered the cause of royalty and religion by the worst of back-stairs intrigue, at a time when the lists of Parliament were open, when the means of publicity were equally so, and when chivalry should have taught Royalists not to shun the high and broad road to success and honour, in order to pursue the crooked and covert one of female blandishments and Court intrigue.

According to the chronicler of the connexion it was only when the feeble Louis began to show himself to be fascinated by his new female favourite, the symptoms of which the noble Sosthene de la Rochefoucauld sedulously watched and reported, that the Royalist conciliabule thought the time come for making a combined and concerted attack upon the monarchial revolution. The hypocrisy of the plotters was equal to the baseness of their intrigue. At the proper moment the Count d'Artois, the Duc d'Angoulême, his Duchess, and the Duchess of Berri repaired in deep mourning to the closet of the King. One would think, that the motives, avowed at least, if not real, of these august personages, would have had some connexion with the melancholy fate of the murdered Duke, and that they came to demand vengeance or to seek expiation. The Duchess d'Angoulême, who undertook to be spokesman on the occasion, declared that "the country was advancing to a revolution; that the throne had need of support; that M. Decazes had offended the Royalists too deeply to be forgiven; that his retirement was necessary, and that then every one would unite in favour of the throne."

The King replied to the Duchess with stern demeanour, reproving her for making domestic grief a mere opportu-

nity for political manœuvre. "M. Decazes," said he, "has defended my authority against these very men who had conspired against it, and displayed every kind of turbulence. He has conducted himself as a faithful minister. Besides he follows the Royal will in everything. His principles and sentiments were those of the King. In Parliament, I can understand," said Louis, "that a difference be made between the will of the King and the acts of his Ministers; but to make such a puerile distinction here in the bosom of my family, can only be done with the intention to offend me."

"In that case," said the Count d'Artois, repeating what he must have known to be an absurd falsehood and a base calumny, "M. Decazes being accused of complicity in the murder of my son, I cannot remain in the Tuileries so long as he is minister."

"What! my brother," exclaimed the King, "is it when a faithful and unfortunate Minister is pursued by a calumny, of which the extravagance equals the atrocity, that you ask that I should strike a man devoted to me? His enemies in the Chamber have rejected the imputation with horror, and you would have me act upon a certain belief in it, when, on the contrary, it is revolting to every faculty of my mind. I never knew a soul more sincere and sensitive than that of M. Decazes. I am convinced that he would give his life for the safety of my nephew, or for me. I respect the errors into which grief throws you. My grief is less cruel, and has not the power of rendering me unjust."

Seeing that there was nothing to be gained by using menace with the King, the Count d'Artois, with his son and daughter, changed to a tone and attitude of supplication. The Duchess too flung away political for domestic

argument. "Our family," said she, "has been deeply tried by misfortune. Let it at least remain united, and let that be our consolation. Do not refuse that family the favour which it asks on its knees."

"I make the request," said the Count d'Artois, sobbing, "as a sacrifice to the manes of my son."

So solemn and so impassioned a demand, Louis XVIII. could no longer refuse. Indeed the whole scene, and its hypocrisy, its calumny, and its pathos were gratuitous. Even Madame Du Cayla's success as a royal favourite was needless; for M. Decazes could not have long sustained himself in Parliament. The King had misgivings of the kind, for when through ill health he was unable to receive the Duke de Richelieu, the King employed the English ambassador to retain the duke, and prevent his departure from Paris; and if Louis still upheld Decazes, it was less with the hope of prolonging his Ministry, than of shielding him from the rancour of his enemies. Immediately after the scene with the Count d'Artois and his family, the King sent for Decazes, and communicated to him what had passed. The Minister renewed his entreaties to be allowed to resign; office had become a burden and a punishment too great to be borne.

"It is not against you," said the King, "that their attack is directed, it is against myself. I will show them that you still possess my esteem and confidence."

Louis then directed the Minister, whom he had so long cherished and upheld, to wait in his name upon the Duke de Richelieu, and persuade him to undertake once more the task of forming an administration, which would satisfy in a certain degree ultra-royalist demands, without placing the Crown under the feet of the chiefs of that party.

M. Decazes was one of those who have been very near making a great name, and living to posterity a great man. For this end it would, no doubt, have been better for M. Decazes, after having fulfilled high aims, to have abstained from condescending to small ones; but a political life is too often short, and M. Decazes flourished too young, to allow that decorous retirement which becomes the invalid of public station. It may be objected to M. Decazes, that he owed his power and eminence less to that intrinsic talent which in constitutional countries raises a man to represent influential bodies, and be the instrument for furnishing great ideas or principles to prevalence and ascendancy, than to his happiness or adroitness in pleasing and becoming the personal favourite of Louis XVIII. But the monarch was not a man to bestow his predilection on one merely possessed of advantages of person or address. Circumstances in 1815 and 1816 gave far more power to the monarch than to the people or the public. Had M. Decazes sought to found a moderate school of policy and an intermediate party at that time by any other means than by royal influence, he would have tried in vain. There was neither a press to speak through, nor a middle class to listen. Neither the one nor the other existed, or had been invented, politically; and M. Decazes has the excuse of having either gone to seek power, or at least having found it, where alone it existed, in the King's closet. Nor could he have used or wielded it without high qualities, without not only those moderate and just views, that perspicuous judgment, and obsequious mode of expressing them which pleased the King, but without those qualities required for maintaining ascendancy in a society like that of Paris, a certain power of oratory,

and the art of managing, conciliating, collecting, and assuming the empire over men. The Ministers who preceded M. Decazes excluded and made no use of men of talent, because they could not appreciate a quality which they themselves were without, and despised. The Ministers who succeeded M. Decazes excluded and kept down talent, because they were ignorant, but jealous of it. Decazes deserves the credit of having descried and held out the instant hand to almost all the political talent of the day. He took the Doctrinaires from obscurity, and formed for them the comfortable and dignified position of the Council of State, an institution well imagined for enlisting and employing the young political talent of the day. Guizot, Villemain, Cuvier, Cousin, Camille Jordan, all owed their rise as public men to Decazes; and he opened not only the folding-doors of political life to the young, but those of the Cabinet to the ablest of his contemporaries. Instead of the stupid owls who filled the comfortable nests of the great offices of State under Prince Talleyrand, who esteemed no capacity, at least in a Minister, save his own, M. Decazes reintroduced such capacities as Pasquier, and Molé, and De Serre to the Cabinet. He was at the same time liberally instrumental in the recal of such talent. He took the name of Constant from the lists of proscription; and, in a word, gave to middle-class interests and middle-class ideas their best representatives and spokesmen. His great praise, however, the great claim of M. Decazes to national esteem and gratitude, lies in his having been the first to endow monarchic France with genuine and direct election, and with the freedom of the press. On the former of these

he based his ministerial power, and with the latter he was proceeding to support it, until he found the Liberals, whom he had called into political existence, were making use of their first strength to overthrow him, and to march over the body of that intermediary party and policy which Louis XVIII. and his Ministry had supported, to impose upon both a party almost as reactionary, in a Bonaparte and revolutionary sense, as the ultra-Royalists were in that of the *ancien régime*. It was then for M. Decazes to have retired and to have left to other statesmen the task, even if he deemed that task necessary, of strengthening the new monarchy against the old Revolution. Unfortunately for his fame, M. Decazes undertook himself the task of undoing his own policy, of modifying his own electoral law. In these intentions a terrible catastrophe, the murder of the only Prince of the reigning family, in whom were the vigour of manhood and probability of succession, by an assassin worked up to his purpose, it would seem, by the current doctrines and general disaffection of the liberal public, came to precipitate events, and with them the Minister himself, into a policy of reaction. He embarked in it with the hopes of preserving his position in the country's councils and the monarch's favour. But the royal family and party would not accept that tardy repentance of M. Decazes, which thus caused the ruin of his power, as it formed the blemish of his public life. In these last acts of his ministerial career, M. Decazes forgot the dignity of the statesman in the cares and necessities of the royal favour. He lost, what all must be prepared to lose—power; yet, had he clung to principle, and preserved reputation, by quitting office earlier, it is probable

that he might have recovered it with greater efficiency and éclat than even at a later day. With all this, French historians have seldom done justice to the merits of Decazes; nor has he reaped the credit fairly due to him from the press which he emancipated, or from the electors whom he first endowed with real and direct rights.

APPENDIX.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE D'ARTOIS TO KING LOUIS XVIII.

Paris, January 23rd, 1818.

SIRE, MY BROTHER AND LORD,

ANY longer silence on my part, in present circumstances, would seem to me contrary to my duties.

If the contents of this letter present a picture painful to the heart of the King, let him judge, from the tender and profound attachment which I entertain towards him, how powerful are, in my estimation, the motives compelling me to destroy the momentary happiness which is the result of a deceptive security.

The time has come to expose the imminent danger now threatening the Monarchy, and which is the inevitable result of the conduct adopted by ministers. A system obstinately pursued in spite of the palpable evils accruing therefrom; the employment of means incompatible with the objects in view; the persecution levelled at the friends of the King and of Royalty; the contempt of monarchic institutions; the encouragement given by Government to doctrines subversive of social order; the favour granted to democratic ideas on the one hand, and to despotism on the other; the protection extended to those who make it their business to support those ideas; the efforts directed against the healthy portion of public opinion, by means of pamphlets, journals, and theatrical performances; the successes already obtained by revolutionists, resulting from concessions either wrung from weakness, or tricked from improvidence; finally, the general agitation lurking in the mass,—

all combined, should induce the King to meditate on the peril which threatens alike France, the throne, and the future prospects of his family.

Such terrible effects must have their causes; and these causes can be retraced throughout the system adopted by the Ministry, a system whose fatal consequences I have long foreseen. Your ministers, my brother, must have informed you that I have more than once freely developed my opinions, and disclosed to them my fears. The source of all their errors arises from having confounded the effects of the Revolution with its moral causes. They fancied that the sanction given by the Charter to the material interests of the Revolution authorised them in showing respect to the causes from which those interests sprung. They have, I repeat, confounded the principle and the consequence. Hence, the accusations pointed at the Royalists from the commencement of their administration, imprudent accusations tending to represent them as ignoring the benefits of the Charter, and which subsequent discussions in the last Sessions of the Chambers have demonstrated to be groundless. Such an homage paid to the idol of the Revolution, inevitably placed ministerial strength out of its natural and legitimate line: it leaned for support on the revolutionary colossus; and it selected most of its auxiliaries from those who had raised this very colossus. This explains to you, my dear brother, how the natural enemies of the throne soon became the most devoted supporters of your ministerial system: it also explains the motives of opposition which the Minister met with on the part of those hitherto considered the most zealous partizans of the legitimate throne. The latter soon discovered the perfidious intentions which their adversaries veiled under the mask of apparent devotion. They were not slow in perceiving that if these insidious apostles of the ministerial conduct rallied round the throne, and guarded its avenues, it was merely in order to make its downfal easier and more certain. They foresaw that ministers would soon be compelled to purchase favours which hearts, truly French, ought to offer gratuitously. They were not mistaken.

The upholders of the ministerial systems demanded guarantees, exacted concessions. Everything was granted them. The decree of the 5th September overturned every obstacle to their impatience. From that date they laid hold upon all offices and employments. Able in profiting by success, they resolved to fortify their influence with the suffrages of the multitude, and the law on elections was

given. Alarmed at the power yet left to the throne, they strove to weaken the just confidence of the people in the promises of its King; they endeavoured to deprive the Crown of its prerogative over the army; and the project of law of recruitment was presented to the Chambers.

Thus was dug that immense abyss, on the brink of which the throne is now placed. The tendencies of revolutionary influence can no longer be mistaken; this influence covers the whole of France. It assumed for a while the royal colours, the better to obtain its object; but with increasing audacity it resumes more and more every day its natural colour. Beneath its ægis are sheltered the chiefs of the future Revolution. The conspiracies, of which the leaders have escaped the watchfulness of a mistrusted police, attest the truth of this. This influence, I repeat, is manifest in every direction and under every form; it is alarmed at the military trophies of La Vendée, whose faithful and peaceable peasantry is disarmed, whilst it causes the re-armament of agitators in the department of the Isère on the most puerile and ridiculous pretexts; it seeks to disorganise the *gendarmerie;* dismisses officers of our army, whose sentiments and devotion gave them a right to expect a recompense for their exertions; and, finally, threatens the throne from which it removes its natural defenders.

It is, consequently, time, Sire, to put an end to a system leading to such results. I have hitherto lamented in secret the deplorable want of foresight shown by the Ministry, but the public voice is too loud to allow myself, placed as I am on the step of the throne, to appear any longer indifferent; my voice must also be heard, or my brother might some day blame my silence.

The picture which I have just delineated of the state of things is conformable with truth. My fears are justified; the revolutionary audacity increases every day; repressive means diminish; the fatal epoch of a catastrophe can almost be computed, and when I look into the future, the past makes answer.

Sire, I have pointed out the danger, I must now indicate the remedies. Replace the ministerial system in its natural and legitimate line; give it a uniform impulse, measured according to the gravity of circumstances, but always consequent on the principle which determines it. Arrest the progress of revolutionary doctrines, without breaking the engagements taken towards monarchical institutions, as consecrated by our laws, from which they derive that strength and authority which can alone guarantee their

stability. Make the Charter popular and respected, like the King himself. These are the principal bases of the new system, the adoption of which can even yet conjure the impending storm.

But it must not be concealed, that amelioration is no longer possible with a Ministry lost in public estimation, which, mistaking momentary caprice for strokes of authority, arbitrary measures for strength, and wearying the nation by the effects of a fatal improvidence, has roused revolutionary hatred, and has sacrificed the throne to their redoubtable influence.

Your ministers, Sire, I am grieved to say it, present the main obstacle to the only good which can be done; the false position in which they are placed deprives them henceforward of the perilous honour of saving monarchy. Too far advanced in the line which they have traced out for themselves, not being able to abandon, without regret, principles to which they have sacrificed everything, to adopt others which they have incessantly opposed, their progress would be vacillating, and their conduct uncertain. Two of them, however, still preserve an honourable share in public respect.

Your faithful subjects may have lamented the measures to which your Ministers of Foreign Affairs have lent their support; but credit may be given to their sentiments of loyalty and of devotion. They will be seen with pleasure in the enjoyment of your confidence, and still at the helm of affairs; but, Sire, the safety of the State demands the removal of their colleagues; and it is only by the prompt sacrifice of a personal interest that the latter can acquire a right to public gratitude.

I have traced to the King the rapid sketch of the frightful situation in which the monarchy is placed: I have pointed out the causes of threatening misfortunes, the remedies to be applied to the evil, the obstacles in the way of whatever good can be done. I have, then, a right, Sire, to hope that my efforts as well as my wishes will not be valueless. Our dangers, our interests are identical; let us unite to brave the one and to support the other. In the impending crisis, I owe to my King, to my family, to France, to make known my fears and my hopes. My fears are justified in the faithful outline which I submit to the King; my hopes are founded on that sentiment of honour which will never be extinguished in the heart of the true friends of monarchy, on the religious love which the generality of the French bear towards the throne of St. Louis: they are grounded especially, Sire, on that paternal tenderness which your heart manifests for your subjects,

and which will not permit you to hesitate, in the conflict of such high interests, to adopt the only means prescribed for the safety of monarchy. These means once adopted, Sire, everything will undergo a change; a calm will replace anxiety, and oblivion will succeed resentment. The French, happy and strong, will rally in one family round the throne, and the reign of your Majesty will be embellished by the splendour of their happiness.

I am, with respect, Sire, my brother and lord, your Majesty's very humble, obedient subject and servant,

CHARLES PHILIPPE.

The King Louis XVIII. replied, on the 29th of January, to the above letter from his brother:—

"I have no need of describing to you, my dear brother, the painful sentiment which your letter caused me. You foresaw it, and your eyes are my witnesses. What I desire is, to reason coolly with you, in order to show your error in most essential points.

"The system that I have adopted, and that my Ministers resolutely follow, is founded on the maxim, that one should not be king of two peoples; and all the efforts of my Government have been directed towards blending these two distinct nations into one. The attempt is no easy one. You may remember with what force, in a council held at Cambray, a certain person depicted the difficulties of such an aim, and how he recommended my flinging myself to that side which he considered the most numerous. I did not adopt his advice, no more than I could adopt the contrary one. Both lead to the dreadful infliction of a civil war. I do not conceal from myself the difficulty, even now, of the task at my age, when I dare not hope to see the term of such effort. I know I must often offend legitimate hopes; that it is impossible to please everybody. Henry IV., to whom I have not the foolish vanity to liken myself, followed this route, and reaped from it nothing but bitterness, accused as he was by his old friends with ingratitude, and by his enemies with treachery. He was wont to reply, 'They will regret me when I am gone.' I dare not say as much; I think, nevertheless, that the memory of a man, whose heart was not bad, and whose intentions were good, ought to merit some regrets. So much for my system; now as to my means of execution."

The King then proceeds to discuss, says the author of the

memoire that Dr. Veron quotes, all the reproaches addressed by the Count d'Artois to his Government, that is, to himself. He denies the assertion, re-establishes the truth, and completely justifies himself. The moral interests of the Revolution were not fostered. As soon as dangerous doctrines appeared in print, they were prosecuted, without extinguishing the press. When laws of exception were necessary, they were demanded and obtained legally of the Chamber. If the country was agitated, and the Jacobins raising their heads, they were encouraged by the monarchical alliance of the Royalists. The men of this party may have good intentions, but they do not see where they lead. Their enemies see more clearly. The King defends the Ordonnance of the 5th of September in the following words:—

"The Ordonnance of the 5th of September, 1816, demands to be told. I will do this in as few words as possible. I may have called the Chamber of 1815 *introuvable*, though I do not remember it. Intoxicated by the marks of attachment which each electoral college gave, I thought their deputies would come together with some confidence in me, and would in every way aid my Government. My joy was not of long duration. The manner in which the Chamber adopted the law against seditious cries began to inspire me with sad reflections. Soon after came the law of the Ministry, where there appeared neither confidence nor respect. They ought to have been contented with that measure of severity which the Royalists remaining in Paris had wrung from me on the 7th of July previous; but the Chamber would have more. The debate was not ambiguous; and that nothing might be wanting, it was a piece of eloquence, insulting to the majesty of the King, which influenced the vote of the Chamber. Thenceforth the Chamber proceeded, with the best of intentions, no doubt, to encroach every day upon the royal prerogative. I then determined to issue the Ordonnance which, I declare to God, rescued me from their hands."

The King examines the complaints that the Royalist functionaries had been persecuted. He denies that they were displaced more than was necessary for the carrying on of the Government.

"The electoral law," continues the King, "would have been better, if the minority had not, from the principle of rendering worse what they considered bad, inserted an article, paralyzing the action of Government. In despite of this the elections of that year were good."

The King then admits that some of the names of members returned were to be regretted; but the same thing happens every day in England. They are accidents by which we must abide. Government was not answerable for such results. It showed, as at Lyons, that it had more consideration for her ardent enemies than for objectionable names, from whom still support might have been had.

With respect to the law of recruitment, the sole point of importance was promotion. But times were past when a soldier satisfied his ambition by entering a corps of halberdiers. A French soldier was accustomed to consider epaulettes and command, and even the marshal's baton, as amongst the prizes or possibilities of his profession. The French army had owed much of its glory and success to this principle. Custom and existing laws were for it. To have abrogated them would have been a dangerous attempt, at a time when it was indispensable to gain the heart of the soldiery. If the law does not endow the prerogative with all it possessed in 1789, it restores much of that which it lost after 1791.

"After having thus justified," continues the King, "the system, the acts, and the principles of my Government, I will surprise you by stating that it is my intention to change neither my system nor my ministers. On the contrary, I am determined to manifest my purpose of supporting them. You are wrong, if you believe that there are any of my ministers who are drawn away to any course against their will. There are no differences in my Cabinet, and neither the ministers excepted in your letter, nor in your previous conversations, would enter any administration founded on different principles. You announce to me that, unless you succeed in converting me to your opinion, you will make your sentiments known. In opposition to what I urge, you plead the example of the statement which you published in 1788; but this example, I repeat to you, proves nothing. The King had, by an *arrêt* of the July previous, asked every one to declare his opinion on the subject of the States-General. The Assembly of Notables was convoked for this very purpose. You were perfectly free then to publish your opinion; but the circumstances are no longer the same. Your duty is, without doubt, to make known to me, with all the energy you please, whatever you deem reprehensible in my Government or in the personal conduct of ministers; but no duty compels you to go further. The late Prince of Conti used to say, 'The Crown belongs to us all, the eldest of the family wears it.' And he was

right. The Crown belongs to all of us, from the presumptive heir to the last offset of the furthest branch; all have the same inalienable, unprescriptible right. But the eldest wears the Crown, that is, exercises all its rights. He is alone judge in doing so, and alone responsible. And he may use the words of Nelson, 'As long as I live, no one commands here but me.' And the more a prince approaches to the Crown by his rank, the more do his duty and his interest command him to fortify and to increase the respect of him who wears that Crown."

After examining the dangers of the system into which his brother seeks to drag him, the King concludes:—

"I cannot, without a shudder, look forward to the instant when I shall close my eyes. You will find yourself then between two parties, of which one deems itself oppressed by me, whilst the other fears to be oppressed by you. Will you embrace one of the two? Do not deceive yourself. Civil war, and all its evils, will be the inevitable consequence. Will you seek to conciliate both? I tell you with grief, but truth, that, like Henry IV., you will be accused of ingratitude on one side, and duplicity on the other. If to succeed is difficult for me, who follow the middle line, how much more difficult will it be for you, who have pronounced for one side of the question! I do not ask you to approve of the invariable resolution that I have taken. Time and reflection will bring you to it; and the last moments of my life, now surrounded by such sombre prospects, may yet expand into happy days.

"Your good brother,

"Louis.

"January 29, 1818."

THE KING'S ACCOUNT OF THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS OF 1818.

December, 1818.

Qui videt, testimonium perhibuit; et verum est testimonium ejus.—St. John, xv.

One of the happiest moments of my life was that which followed the visit of the Emperor of Russia. Not to mention his extreme kindness in coming to see me, and his imitating, but in a nobler manner, the conduct pursued from mere flattery by the Duc de la Feuillade towards Louis XIV., it was difficult not to be satisfied with our interview. The Emperor not only entered into all my

thoughts, but even expressed them for me before I had time to do so myself. He had loudly approved the system of government and the line of government I followed since I determined to issue the Ordonnance of the 5th September, 1816 (I must observe that it was the period of the elections in Paris, and that the Emperor left Paris in the persuasion that Benjamin Constant would be elected). He praised my Ministers, and especially the Count Decazes, for whom I must express a friendship founded upon the solid and amiable qualities which he possesses, and upon an attachment, of which one must have been the object in order to appreciate it fully. I saw then as certain the withdrawal of the army of occupation, upon moderate conditions; and external tranquillity insured for a long time, whilst nothing seemed to threaten internal peace.

Some of the elections displeased me, such as those of the Sarthe, the Vendée, and Finisterre; but those are annoyances attached to a constitution like ours, and on the whole they were good. I observed with pain in the letters of the Duc de Richelieu that he was more annoyed than I was; but I flattered myself that, on his return here, by uniting himself more closely with his colleagues, he would find a remedy for the evil produced by the *Minerve*, and, I may say, aggravated by the *Conservateur*.

I was deceived; he had, without consulting me, sought, and had found, a remedy from others. My readers will be astonished at the words—without consulting me. In tracing them I am aware of the ideas they will suggest respecting me, but let me tell the full truth.

For a long time all the world was persuaded that were the ultra-Royalists convinced of the impossibility of succeeding in their plan of exaggeration, and, abandoning their personal hatreds, to embrace frankly the system of moderation, the ultra-Liberals would no longer hold up their heads. Every one knows that Ministers had been trying to do this, but all know, too, the small result of the negociation. The ultra-Royalists had demanded concessions of principles, personal guarantees which it was impossible to grant. Far from drawing near to the Ministry, whom they ceased not to insult by their writings, their leaders had, in the session of 1815, acted in concert with the ultra-Liberals. More might be said, but nothing has been judicially proved. My Ministers and myself felt the necessity of a reconciliation; it was also the opinion of best-informed foreigners. The Duke of Wel-

lington had spoken to me about it on his return from Aix-la-Chapelle: "The ultra-Royalists," said he, "must be brought back to the Ministry; but," added he, "without any conditions." The aspect of the session which was about to open had nothing alarming in it; the Ministry, so much decried by exaggeration on either side, had nevertheless restored order and confidence. France was respected abroad; credit might have been somewhat shaken, but it was only that of the Bank; for whilst the five per cents. fell, treasury bills kept up their prices. I have already said that the generality of the elections was good: thus, although we might expect angry debates, it was probable that, in the Chamber of Deputies, the majority in favour of the Ministry would be at least what it was in the last session: there was still a majority, though a diminished one, in the Chamber of Peers. Such appeared to me the state of things when the Duc de Richelieu returned on the 28th November.

Before going further, I must mention how the Count Decazes was situated. His Ministry, so important while the law of the 29th October was in operation, had become much less so since the expiration of that law; it was about to be deprived of the censorship of the journals. The enemies of the Count Decazes, after having in attacking his conduct exemplified the fable of the serpent and the file, had changed their tactics. It was no longer the Minister, but the Ministry whom they assailed, describing it as anti-constitutional, arbitrary, and the cause of superfluous expenditure. With such arguments it was easy to win the suffrages of the multitude; and matters came to that point that it seemed doubtful whether in the ensuing session the funds for the police would be voted. Even were they so, what was a Ministry without power, and yet with the burthen of responsibility? The Count Decazes felt this so sensibly, that he proposed the suppression of his Ministry, and consequently his own retirement from the Cabinet. His colleagues protested against the idea, not willing to lose his sound and cool judgment in critical affairs, and his ability to surmount difficulties. Others, perhaps, thought that my friendship for him rendered him a useful intermediary between the King and the Cabinet. The Duc de Richelieu, who entertained the first opinion, tried to preserve M. Decazes as a colleague by proposing that M. Lainé should cede to him the Home Office and take that of Justice; an arrangement which I offered, and M. Pasquier consented to facilitate, by re-establish-

ing the Ministry of the Household for the latter, with a seat in the Cabinet. But M. Lainé refused to change, and offered his resignation; which I declined to accept, the more as the Duc de Richelieu declared he would not remain in office without him. M. Decazes consented to bear till the end of the session the burden of the Ministry, expiring as it was; and the Cabinet remained unmodified.

I mentioned that the Duc de Richelieu had acted without my knowledge in seeking a remedy for the evil he apprehended. Narrating these circumstances, even after so short a time elapsed, I seem to be in a painful dream when recalling what actually took place. Posterity will never believe that any Minister could conceive, much less execute, a plan, of which the inevitable result must be to change the whole manner of government, without speaking a word of it to the King. It will be still less believed that the Duc de Richelieu was the Minister to do this, one of the most loyal characters that ever existed, and that the King was no other than Louis XVIII., who might be accused of weakness but never of indiscretion, and whom, consequently, it would have been easy, without any compromise of secresy, to attempt to convert to these opinions. It is true, however, notwithstanding the improbability; and it is necessary to establish the truth, in order to prevent those who are unacquainted with the facts from accusing me of following throughout this astonishing month of December, 1818, a most tortuous course. In thus defending myself I appear to accuse the Duc de Richelieu. Nor can I exculpate him from the mystery with which he treated me; but I am persuaded (and it will be afterwards seen whether I am not right) that the Duc de Richelieu was himself ignorant of the course he was made to take. He wished to rally the ultra-Royalists to the Ministry in changing the law of election, and he did not perceive that it was all the while the Ministry that he was placing at the mercy of the ultra-Royalists. Who conceived the plan, who laid the foundation of its success, I am ignorant; and I merely seek here to set down facts which fell within my knowledge, adding such reflections as seem plausible.

It is certain at least that efforts were made to detach from the Centre, which till then had formed the strength of the Ministry in both Chambers, a number of members sufficiently great to insure a majority to the ultra-Royalists. The intrigue was conducted with a secresy worthy of praise in a better cause; it had escaped

even the vigilant eyes of Decazes. Its success, doubtful in the Chamber of Deputies, was complete in that of the Peers. The first knowledge I had of it was through the Chancellor, who a few days before the opening of the session came to mention to me the names of those fixed in the consultation of the ministerialists for the Secretaries of the Chamber of Peers. He added, indeed, that he was not certain, as there was another group who might propose and support other candidates. As he said no more, I thought that he alluded to the ultra-Royalists and their plans. But I soon learned more from M. de Dreux-Brezé, who told me that there had been formed, in consequence of the suggestion of the Duc de Doudeauville, a reunion of ministerial members to bring about a reconciliation with the Right. At the same time he showed me a list of names proposed for the secretaryships, as well as for the Commission of Address in this Assembly. At the head of the first list were the Duc de Doudeauville, M. de Verac, the Duc de Bellune, and M. Dubouchage. I had no objection to the two first; and was about to make some observations respecting the two last, when I perceived on the second list—that of the Commission of the Address in answer to my speech—the names of Viscount Montmorency and the Marquess of Talaru, both frenetic ultra-Royalists and writers in the *Conservateur*. This made me break forth. I reproached M. de Brezé with his connexion with people who could fix upon such choice of names for the Address, and even quoted to him the lines of Athalie—

Rompez, rompez tout pacte avec l'impiété.

I know not what more I may have said, I was so animated. He defended himself by mentioning the names of many sensible and honourable men, who had joined the Association. And at last he told me, that it held its meetings at the house of Cardinal de Beausset. A thunderbolt could not have more astounded me than this name. As the people, when oppressed, used to console themselves by exclaiming, "If our good King but knew it!" so I cried, "If the Duc de Richelieu but knew it!" He had, indeed, mentioned to me a conference that he was to have with M. de Villele; but as he never spoke of its result to me, or to his colleagues, I considered it to be as null as former conferences. But the name of Cardinal de Beausset undeceived me. He was too sensible, too closely connected with the Duc de Richelieu, to trace

such a step without the Duke's consent. I grew cool immediately, dismissed M. de Brezé, and abandoned myself to my reflections.

They were sad, it may be well believed. I saw myself thrown into the sad alternative of either approving, without knowing it, a line of policy opposed to that which I had followed for two years—and which I thought the only good one—or to break with the Duc de Richelieu. The first was little glorious, and had its dangers. The second had still more serious inconveniences. The conduct of the Duc de Richelieu to me was certainly such as is difficult to find a name for. I cannot conceive, much less justify it. The Duke had been called to the Ministry under the most critical circumstances for a State. He accepted the difficulty, and signed the Convention of November, 1815. Posterity must ever thank him. Upwards of a million of foreign soldiers, well-intentioned perhaps, but inflated with victory, and ardent for pillage, covered half the soil of the country. The sovereigns treated my grey hairs with respect, but the rod of conquest made itself not the less felt. Two prefects (those of the Sarthe and the Loiret) had been torn from their duties and dragged into captivity. M. Decazes, then prefect of police, had nearly shared their fate. The *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, the possession of which was guaranteed to France by the treaty of the 30th of May, 1814, had been taken by force from my residence. In the south of France, had it not been for the heroic courage of the Duc d'Angoulême who, without arms, without means, had kept in check General Castanos, the Spaniards would have come to take their share in the spoil without having shared the victory. But the danger was only delayed. What were our resources? None, we must own. The army of the Loire, which I believe would have been but a weak one, was disbanded, and if there remained any energy in France, it was only shown in the ferments of civil war. We could not even hope for the melancholy glory which honoured the last moments of Carthage. Foreigners, it is true, imposed upon us hard conditions: and, as may be seen, we were not in a position to refuse them; and, independently of the havoc made by them, their presence alone cost France daily more than a million. Under such circumstances, a good man, the friend of his country, disdains idle clamours, and goes straight to his aim. This is what the Duc de Richelieu did, and posterity will feel it, and revenge the dishonour which was attempted to be thrown upon him on this occasion. From this time, an extreme loyalty had not only gained him from foreigners a consideration

such as few Ministers have enjoyed, but also at home it had forced the bitterest adversaries of our system to revile his talents, not daring to attack him personally. Finally, he had just signed the famous acts of Aix-la-Chapelle, which had freed France and placed it in the rank to which it belonged. To these considerations were joined others very powerful: all my Ministers would have quitted me, especially the Count Decazes, who had often declared to me (and I was of his opinion) that, if, on his return from Aix-la-Chapelle, the Duc de Richelieu should, as he proposed, resign, he would follow his example. Now, if they were resolved upon a voluntary resignation, what would they do were it forced upon them? Where also should I have found strength necessary to act with vigour? I, who notwithstanding the inconceivable silence of the Duc de Richelieu, in spite of other thoughts still more painful, still regret that I have no longer with me a man whom bad advice might lead astray, or into acts contrary to his nature, but whose natural uprightness would soon recall him, as he never erred from the heart. I resolved, therefore, to appear ignorant of what they concealed from me, and to continue the line of conduct I had chosen, which was the more easy to me, as the Duc de Richelieu told me (and I am sure with truth) that he had not changed his system. Nor was there any appearance of schism in the ministry. My speech on the opening of Parliament was discussed, adopted unanimously, save a few phrases, which had been added at the last moment by the proposal of the Duc de Richelieu, but the idea came from M. Decazes (this among others: the Prince has just recovered his independence, without which there is neither king nor nation).

This apparent union did not last. The Session commenced on the 10th, and from the 12th the Council of Ministers deliberated as to what measures should be taken in present circumstances. The Keeper of the Seals, who spoke first, described very well their importance, but without coming to any conclusion. M. Roy did the same. Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr and M. Decazes voted for continuing the present course. M. Molé, M. Lainé, and the Duc de Richelieu thought it better to incline towards the Right, and therefore propose a change in the electoral law. There was no decided majority, and the debate was adjourned to the 14th. It took place in fact without any other result; but matters were considered sufficiently advanced to lay before me in the next Cabinet Council.

Several things occurred in the interval. The Chamber of Peers nominated its committee, which was the same that M. de Brezé had submitted to me, except that M. de Pastoret was substituted for M. Dubouchage, and that, it was said, on my account, as M. Dubouchage having been my Minister, I might not find it agreeable to see him so often. He forgot that the preceding year the ultra-Royalists, profiting by a mistake of the Ministerialists, had placed the Duc de Feltre in a secretaryship, having left the ministry after M. Dubouchage; or rather they wished to show in public a pretended respect for me more insulting than a direct outrage. When, upon the Commission for the Address, he had paid the Duc de Richelieu the compliment to ask whom he would desire should be named; to this question, giving way to a natural movement, he had answered "Ministerialists." But they soon showed him that they only paid him a useless compliment, for they declared that to be impossible. I cannot conceive how it was that his eyes were not then opened,—how it was that he did not see that he was the slave of the party he had so imprudently favoured, and who only wished to make of him an idol such as the Gentiles had, *who have eyes and see not;* and, finally, how it was that he did not make a generous effort to break at least his chain. But no, he merely replied, warmly: "Well, rational people! (*des gens raisonnables!*) These rational people were Messrs. de Talaru, the Viscount de Montmorency, de Fontanes, de Pastoret, and de Rosambo, not less ultra-Royalist than the two first. I was, as may be thought, more hurt at this nomination than at that of the committee; but persuaded that a king cannot commit a greater fault than to show useless anger, I contented myself by saying inwardly with bitterness:—

Attale, etait-ce ainsi que regnaient tes ancêtres?

But the pain which I felt was light in comparison with what followed. The Duc de Richelieu, who had always shown himself so openly and nobly the friend of the Count Decazes, who, a few days before quitting Aix-la-Chapelle, had written to him about an affair which interested him personally, and which had not succeeded, "that he was in despair at having failed in the only negociation which really interested him:" the Duc de Richelieu, I say, seemed to have quarrelled with him; he neither called upon him, nor answered his letters. Prepared as I was for some time for the resignation of M. Decazes, whose ministry I saw could not

continue, my friendship for him made me hope that at least he might resign honourably; and I well knew what an advantage his enemies would have should his resignation proceed from a rupture with the Duc de Richelieu. On the other side, and independently of the Count Decazes, nothing was more precarious than the Ministry. M. Lainé had signified his firm intention of resigning. The Duc de Richelieu declared that he would not remain a second after him; and my efforts with the former had a very equivocal success.

May I be permitted to mention here the state of my health at that time, not to excite pity, but to serve as an excuse for the faults which I may have committed in such difficult junctures. On the 12th, I had an attack of gout: it was so slight during three days, that I thought it would be nothing; but on the 16th, in the evening, the pain became very severe—and on the 16th began what I will describe in a few words: great suffering, little sleep, no appetite, fever, and prostration of strength, both physical and moral. Such was my state during more than eight days.

Meanwhile the horizon seemed to clear up a little. The Ministers who were members of the Chamber of Deputies, being obliged to be there on Wednesday the 16th, the day for the election of candidates for the Presidency, the Council was adjourned until Thursday. On Wednesday evening, the Duc de Richelieu appeared unexpectedly at the Count Decazes' assembly, was there very complaisant with him, and the next day went to see him. There was an explanation between them, when they embraced, and it was agreed that at the Council the great question should be touched upon lightly.

The Council was held on the 17th. The Keeper of the Seals spoke first, as he had done at the Duc de Richelieu's; that is to say, fully, but without concluding anything. Marshal Gouvion was for changing nothing, nor even for modifying the electoral law. M. Molé declared that he thought it would be impossible to continue the line of conduct followed up to the present time; he inclined towards the ultra-Royalists, without concealing that it was giving themselves masters, but because of two evils one should choose the least. M. Lainé thought that they ought to hoist the ministerial flag, and hold out their hands to the right and left. M. Roy was of the same opinion. M. Decazes exposed the danger he saw in trying to change, or rather to destroy the electoral law, which he described as eminently popular, and he decided upon

remaining as we were. The Duc de Richelieu spoke last. It was easy to perceive that he inclined towards the opinion of M. Molé; but he came to no better conclusions than the Keeper of the Seals and M. Roy. At last I spoke; and, taking up the idea of M. Lainé—Let us, said I, hoist our flag upon the Ordonnance of the 5th September 1816. Let us follow that line which has united us until now. Hold out the hand to the right and to the left, saying with Cæsar, "He who is not against me is with me." Thus terminated the Council. I was simple enough to believe that all discord in the Ministry would cease; but I was soon undeceived.

On the 16th, M. Ravez had obtained the necessary number of votes for the candidateship of the Presidency. M. de Serre had nearly as many as he; nevertheless, I was obliged to nominate M. Ravez. I was wrong to be in such a hurry to say it, or the Duc de Richelieu to inform M. Ravez, before the affair had been discussed in the Council. This double error caused the ultra-Royalists to triumph, who seeing the choice which the Chamber of Peers had made, and this latter (for it must be owned that M. Ravez who had allowed himself to be gained over) no longer doubted of their victory. Their joy was of short duration. Among the vice-presidents there was but one from whom they could hope anything—this was M. Blanquart de Bailleul, who was in the same position as M. Ravez. But the choice of the Secretaries, and especially that of M. de Saint Aulaire, the father-in-law of the Count Decazes, proved that the old ministerialists were not yet conquered. I confess that I felt some pleasure at it; but it was transient, for the Duc de Richelieu was so much annoyed, that, for the first time in his life, on the Sunday following (the elections had taken place Friday and Saturday) he spoke to me of M. Decazes with bitterness, accusing him of being the spirit of the choice. I then felt that the schism was accomplished. I was deeply grieved; but, for the before-mentioned reasons, I was resolved, whatever it might cost me, to sacrifice all to the advantage of preserving the Duc de Richelieu as Prime Minister. I was in this state of mind when I received, on Monday evening and Tuesday morning, letters from the Duc de Richelieu, M. Molé, M. Lainé, M. Pasquier, and M. Decazes.

Of these I answered only that of the Duc de Richelieu, to whom I wrote that his unexpected step had so much disturbed me that I was unable to give him a satisfactory answer, and that I should like to see him before he took a final resolve. He came, in fact,

on the afternoon of Tuesday. I did not conceal the chagrin which I felt, and I begged of him to consider that, besides the grief of losing him, I found myself reduced to the painful necessity of having recourse to . . . . . He listened to me with apparently as much grief as I felt. We separated without coming to any agreement, and the next day I received from him the following letter:—

"Your Majesty may imagine in what a painful position yesterday's conversation has left me, and also what I have suffered from seeing the grief which I have caused your Majesty. I am too well aware of my incapacity in such difficult circumstances, and in a business for which no one could be less fit than I am, as I had the honour, Sir, of informing you yesterday. My mission was ended so soon as the important affairs with the foreigners were concluded. Those of the Home Office are unknown to me, as well as the leading of the Chambers, and I have neither aptitude nor capacity for them. It is my duty to inform your Majesty, in all sincerity, that in retaining me, you will do harm to yourself and the country; and this sentiment, which you had the goodness to call modesty, is but the result of a profound knowledge of myself. To think otherwise, would be an inexcusable presumption on my part.

"After having confessed this much to your Majesty, to which I entreat you to give your serious attention, I must inform you that, if you persist in desiring to retain me, in spite of the powerful reasons I advance, I neither can or ought to refuse my consent; but in order that my services may not from the first be rendered useless, perfect unity must be established in the Ministry. Your Majesty knows whether I love and esteem M. Decazes. I shall ever preserve these sentiments. But, on one side outraged by a party whose imprudence has caused so much trouble, it is impossible for him to be on good terms with it; on the other, urged towards a party whose doctrines are still more menacing, unless he is established out of France in some eminent employment, all the men in opposition to the Ministry will look to him for the fulfilment of their hopes, and he will become, even in spite of himself, no doubt, an obstacle to the Government. It is much against my inclination that I express myself thus to your Majesty. Intrigues, ambition, and the means usually employed, are foreign to me; but I owe it to your Majesty to say the truth, at least as I believe it. I feel how painful the sacrifice of which I speak is to your Majesty, to M. Decazes, and, dare I say it, to myself; but I believe it necessary,

if I am to remain at the head of affairs. The Embassy to Naples or to St. Petersburg, the departure announced within a week; such are, in my opinion, the indispensable preliminaries, I do not say to the success, but to the free action of the administration. Your Majesty knows that it does not become me to make such conditions. The situation in which I placed your Majesty yesterday, and the despair which it caused me, have alone decided me to confide in you. Your Majesty will make what use of my communication you shall think fit.

"In case your Majesty should insist upon my remaining, dare I ask that you will use all possible means to retain M. Lainé, without whom I could not possibly remain in the Ministry, and M. Roy? If you will employ those persuasions, which nothing can resist, I think you will not find it difficult to overcome their scruples. After having thus unbosomed myself, permit me, Sire, to throw myself at the feet of your Majesty, and implore permission to resign; I repeat it, I have neither capacity nor talents necessary to unravel the difficulty of governing the Chambers. I have not been accustomed to this life, and assuredly I should not succeed. Your Majesty is warned; do not expose yourself to see these prognostics verified."

As I said, I was resigned to M. Decazes quitting the Ministry; but such a separation as that proposed was, as may be imagined, much more painful. I wrote to him immediately; but I had not the courage to explain to him *in extenso* the above letter; I only transcribed the essential points. He flattered himself that his absence from Paris would suffice; and in his answer he proposed to set off immediately, and pass three months with his family at Libourne. Reasonable, and I may say generous, as was this offer, I scarcely flattered myself that it would be accepted. Nevertheless, I resolved to try, and the Duc de Richelieu having come to me before the Council sat, I made the overture to him in the way which I thought best to allay the storm. But those *seductive manners, which nothing could resist*, failed of their effect. The Duc de Richelieu, overruled by a strange impulse, was completely out of character. He was insensible to the delicate situation of Madame Decazes, who was but sixteen years old. He persisted in the departure for Russia as the *sine quâ non* of the continuation of his Ministry, and insisted that I should, after the Council, ask M. Decazes for his final resolution. Resolved upon any sacrifice to retain the Duc de Richelieu, I undertook the com-

mission; and fulfilled it; but, I confess, in uttering a desire so cruel for him, and so painful for me, my firmness forsook me, and I burst into tears. My victim endeavoured to soften my grief, and declared himself perfectly resigned. Nevertheless, a moment after, the thought of the fatigue, and even danger, to his beloved wife in such a journey, came to his mind, and exclaiming, "Oh, my poor wife!" he could not restrain his tears. He soon resumed his courage, however; and quitting me, he wrote to the Duc de Richelieu that he consented.

The same day, three hours after this distressing scene, I received the Address of the Chambers in reply to my speech on the opening of the session, and I was obliged to appear with a countenance calm, serene, even contented; for after all the addresses were good. And we are envied!

The next day, 24th, the Duc de Richelieu, recovering his temper, either by himself or by the advice of M. Lainé, who, they say, represented strongly to him the harshness of his demand, consented to accept the journey to Libourne. Other embarrassments soon came upon him. He had reckoned that with the exception of M. Decazes (and perhaps Marshal Gouvion) the Cabinet would continue as it was; but M. Lainé, although desiring a change in the electoral law, declared formally that he would never present one which should destroy that which was his own work, and which he had defended with such success. M. Roy intimated that he would not remain without M. Decazes, and the others also refused. On the 25th the Duc de Richelieu and M. Lainé, having met M. Decazes in my apartments, after mass, proposed to him that he should form a Ministry, and, upon his absolute refusal, they came and begged me to persuade him to do so. Although I approved his resolution, I replied that I would speak to him, but that I was sure beforehand that my efforts would be as useless as theirs. I sent for him, and his answer was what I anticipated. The Duc de Richelieu then resolved to form an entirely new Ministry, composed in the following manner: Justice, M. Simeon; War, General Lauriston; Marine, M. de Villele; Interior, M. Cuvier; Finances, M. Mollien; Directeur-General of the Police under the President of the Council, M. de Tournon, Prefect of the Gironde. One alone among these names displeased me; but I had made up my mind to make no objections to anything; and, besides, after having made the greatest of sacrifices, could I be stopped by a less? On the evening of the

25th the Duc de Richelieu thought himself certain of success; but insurmountable difficulties presented themselves: M. Cuvier made the same objection as M. Laîné; M. Mollien (engaged, it was said, elsewhere) positively refused. I was indirectly informed of this during the day; and in the evening of the 26th I received from the Duc de Richelieu the following letter:—

"I have again uselessly endeavoured to form a Ministry which might offer to your Majesty and to France some guarantees in the crisis. M. Roy, whom I considered indispensable in the Finance, has refused all my solicitations; my other colleagues could not agree on the measures to be taken; and I find myself again under the necessity of entreating your Majesty to absolve me from a task which I cannot fulfil with success. I have given proofs, Sire, of the utmost devotedness in endeavouring twice to form a Ministry; and your Majesty will recognise what I had the honour to say before my departure for Aix-la-Chapelle, and what I have taken the liberty to repeat verbally and by writing since my return—that I was not competent to conduct the business of the Home department, and that my mission was ended when the negociation with foreigners was concluded. But why should your Majesty think it indispensable to call in . . . if I fail? Does there exist no one in your kingdom but he or I to take the lead in the council; and if we both fail, must the State perish? I cannot believe it. There are Marshals and Peers of France who certainly might replace us. Without naming others, could not Marshals Macdonald and Marmont be chosen? They understand the army and the country; they will cause no mistrust to foreigners. I repeat to your Majesty, I cannot again undertake an office which I am incapable of filling after such fruitless essays. It is therefore with pain, but with a firm determination, that I beg of your Majesty to accept my resignation, and at the same time my homage."

This letter was so positive, and the resolution of the Duc de Richelieu too much commanded by circumstances, to render it possible for me to endeavour to retain him any longer. Therefore, with the sincerest regret, I accepted his resignation. His letter had opened my eyes to the fact of it being possible to do without . . . . But I was not the less embarrassed, for neither one nor other of the Marshals mentioned by the Duc de Richelieu could, in my opinion, replace him. The Keeper of the Seals entered just as I was sending my reply to the Duc de Richelieu;

I spoke to him upon the state of affairs. He went immediately to seek M. Decazes; and the latter conceived the idea of confiding the helm to General Dessolles. This suited my ideas, and I charged him with the arrangement, mentioning M. de Jaucourt and M. de Serre. The next morning (Sunday) he saw the General, and made the proposal to him, which was accepted. Count Decazes was in ecstasies; he did not foresee the difficulties which were to arise. The Marquis Dessolles, wishing, as was natural, to form his own Cabinet, thought first of M. de Serre for Justice, and Baron Louis for the Finances. He spoke to them, and all three agreed to accept, but with a *sine quâ non* condition that the Count Decazes had a seat in the Cabinet. When this was proposed to him he refused strongly, and even with tears. At last the Marquis Dessolles came and begged me to overcome his resistance.

Had I consulted but my own feelings, I should have desired that M. Decazes, joining, as he had always intended, his fate with that of the Duc de Richelieu, should quit the Ministry with him. But, 1, if the Duc de Richelieu retired, it was not that he preferred quiet, but it was that ministerial life was extinct in him; 2, he had separated his fate from that of the Count Decazes when he demanded his retirement, while he retained all his other colleagues; 3, the Count was in a manner in the same position as when I proposed to him the embassy to St. Petersburgh: in both cases on his acceptance depended the existence of the Ministry; and if he had sacrificed his happiness to it once, why should he not give up scruples henceforth vain? These considerations decided me. The Count Decazes submitted and the Ministry was formed. I should add, that this Ministry had the full approbation of the Duc de Richelieu, who told me so the first time that I saw him again, and who, having become himself again, never ceased personally while he remained in Paris, and afterwards by his letters, to show that friendship for Count Decazes which had always united them.

If this little work finds some readers, were it the most decided antagonist, he will find in it curious events; but I dare believe that he will also find that all those pretended intrigues have never existed, and are but the pure invention of party spirit, so fertile in this way.

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